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# Prabuddha Bharata

OR AWAKENED INDIA

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

Vol. XLI

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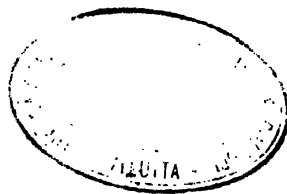
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# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XLI

JANUARY, 1936

No. 1



“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

## SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

[In His Own Words]

“She, the Divine Mother has spoken to me. I have not merely seen Her, She has also talked with me. I was under the banyan tree in the temple garden. She came out of the Ganges to me. Oh, how She laughed ! She played with my fingers and cracked them in fun. And then She spoke— She talked with me !

“I cried for three days continuously. And She revealed to me all the contents of the *Vedas*, *Purânas*, and *Tantras*.

“One day She showed me the secret of the fascination of *Mâyâ*. A small light appeared in my room. Then it began to grow larger and larger. At last it engulfed the whole world.

“I was also shown the vision of a large tank covered with sedges. Wind blew and pushed aside some of the plants

and water appeared. But very soon the removed plants came back dancing and re-covered the exposed water. It was indicated that the water was the *Sachchidânanda*, the sedges the *Mâyâ* which obstructed His vision. Even if there are momentary glimpses, *Mâyâ* veils Him again.

“I am shown what kinds of devotees would visit me even before they come here. I was shown the *Samkirtan* procession of *Chaitanyadeva* winding between the banyan tree and the *Bakul* tree. In it I saw *Balaram* and also him (*Mahendra*).

“I had a vision of *Keshab Sen* even before I met him. I saw in a state of *Samâdhi*, the vision of *Keshab* and his followers. A crowd of people sat before me filling the room. *Keshab* was looking like a peacock spreading his tail.

This spread tail was his followers. A red gem glittered on his head, which was a sign of Rajas. Keshab was saying to his followers: 'Listen to what he is saying.' I said to Mother: 'Mother, they are votaries of English ideas. Why should I talk to them?' Mother explained to me that such things would happen in this Kali Yuga."

"I had wonderful visions. I saw the Undivided Existence-Knowledge-Bliss in which there was a partition. On one side were Kedar, Chuni, and other devotees who believed in God with forms. On the other side was an effulgent light as brightly red as brick-dust. Within this light sat Narendra immersed in Samâdhi. Seeing him thus absorbed, I called him by name. He slightly opened his eyes and I came to know that he had been born in this form in a Kâyastha family of Simla (Calcutta). Then I prayed to Mother, saying: 'Mother, bind him with Mâyâ, or he will give up his body in Samâdhi.' Kedar who believes in God with form looked at Narendra, then started up and fled away.

"That is why I think that the Mother Herself has been born and is playing within this (his body) as a devotee. When I first reached this state, my body became effulgent. My chest assumed a red hue. I then prayed to Mother, 'Mother, do not manifest Thyself outside, repair within.' That is why I have got such a poor body now. Otherwise people would not have given me peace. There would have been crowds of people about me if I had that effulgent body. There is no outward manifestation now. Worthless people go away. Only those who are pure devotees remain. Why have

I this illness? It also has a like significance.

"I had a desire to be the prince of devotees and I prayed to the Mother accordingly. Again, the desire arose in my mind that those who had called sincerely on the Lord, must come here, —they must. You see that is what is happening,—those very people are coming.

"My father knew who is in me. He had a dream at Gaya in which Raghuvir appeared and said: 'I shall take birth as your son.'

"Even He is dwelling within me. Renunciation of Kâmini and Kâanchana! —Is that possible for me? I have not experienced sexual intercourse even in dream!"

"I said to Mother: 'Mother, how will this body be maintained, and how can I live with Sâdhus and, devotees? Provide me a rich man.' That is why Sejo Babu (Mathuranath) served me for fourteen years.

"He who is within this, informs me beforehand to what spiritual planes the coming devotees belong. When I have the vision of Gourânga before me, I know that a devotee of Gourânga is coming. If a Sâkta is to come, I have the vision of Sakti—Kâli.

"At the time of the evening service in the Temple, I used to go to the roof of the Kuthi and cry: 'Oh, where are you? Come, come!' See they are all coming now.

"He Himself is dwelling within this and is communing with the devotees."

## SWAMI VIVEKANANDA IN OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

[In order to add, if possible, to the more or less fragmentary data which have been published to date on the sojourn of Swami Vivekananda in Oakland, California, we have made a careful search of potential sources of information, with very gratifying results. Swamiji stopped in Oakland during his tour of the United States on his second visit to America, and he gave a number of lectures in Wendte Hall of the First Unitarian Church in Oakland, during the period from February 25, 1900 to April 8, 1900. Through the courtesy of the *Oakland Tribune*, one of the prominent papers of that city, we have been permitted to copy from their files of the papers for 1900, the reports of Swamiji's lectures. We have also secured from the bound copies of the *Oakland Enquirer* for the year 1900 in the Oakland Public Library, the accounts given in that paper. (The *Enquirer* later consolidated with another paper started after 1900 and is now the *Post-Enquirer*.) On the following pages the newspaper accounts are given in chronological order from the *Oakland Tribune*, followed by the accounts from the *Oakland Enquirer* in chronological order. Though the *Enquirer* reported the same lectures as the *Tribune*, the accounts vary; in addition, the *Enquirer* reported more of Swamiji's lectures than the *Tribune* and published some items of an editorial nature. The entire group of items from both papers are therefore worthy of record because they help to shed light on a period which heretofore has not been described in detail in the Life of Swamiji. Each item is given word for word as it appeared in the paper.—Ed.]

### FROM THE OAKLAND TRIBUNE

February 26, 1900

#### HINDOO PRIEST IN THE PULPIT

*Tells Claims of Vedantism on the  
Modern World*

The claims of the Brahmin religion, or Vedantism, on the modern world, were presented last night at the Congress of Religions in the First Unitarian Church by Swami Vivekananda, remarkably eloquent expounder of that faith. His lecture proved one of the most instructive of the series given before the Congress and decidedly the most novel.

Vivekananda is a Hindoo, and after attending the Congress of Religions in Chicago during the World's Fair he lectured to thronged houses in many of our largest cities. When he returned to his people in India they hailed him as a deliverer of the Western world. They were wrought up with excessive enthusiasm and fairly carried him in

their arms from city to city. This is his second tour in this country.

To his auditors last night he explained Vedantism as the religion of the Vedas, or ancient Hindoo books, which, he asserted, is "the mother of religion".

"It may seem ridiculous how a book can be without beginning or end," he said, "but by the Vedas no books are meant. They signify the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws discovered by different persons in different times. The Hindoo believes he is a spirit. Him the sword cannot pierce, him the fire cannot burn, him the water cannot melt, him the air cannot dry. He believes every soul is a circle whose circumference is nowhere, but whose center is located in a body. Death means the change of this center from body to body. We are the children of God. Matter is our servant.

"Vedantism is a sort of rebellion against the mockery of the past. Some men are so practical that if they were told that by chopping off their heads

they could get salvation there are many who would do so. That is all outward; you must turn your eyes inward to learn what is in your soul. Soul is spirit omnipresent. Where does the soul go after death? Where could the earth fall to? Where can the soul go? Where is it not already? The great cornerstone of Vedantism is the recognition of Self. Man, have faith in yourself.

"The soul is the same in every one. It is all purity and perfection and the more pure and perfect we are the more purity and perfection you will see.

"A man or preaching jack who cries, 'Oh, Lord, I'm only a crawling worm!' should be still and crawl into his hole. His cries only add more misery to the world. I was amused to read in one of your papers, 'How would Christ edit a paper?' How foolish. How would Christ cook a meal? Yet, you are the advanced people of the West! If Christ came here, you would shut up shop and go into the street with him to help the poor and down-trodden. Vedantism is the only religion that can be told without lies, without stretching of texts, without compromise."

## THE VOICE OF THE HIMALAYAS

BY THE EDITOR

### I

The Father of mountains stands on earth as the living witness of all that takes place under the sun. The drama of nations is always enacted before its grand and majestic presence. Its snow-peaks look up and gaze at the blue sky, marking the movements of the heavenly bodies. The eternal Himalayas bring mankind the tidings of a mysterious silence. Its immensity and serenity overpower our imagination and take us to a land of dreams "where worldly taint could never reach." On the summits of its mountains, in the calmness of its caves, and on the banks of its rivers, the blessed ancestors of the human race felt the heart of Truth in austere aloofness and transcendental joy. It is only in the dispassionate meditation that the Rishis could unravel the mysteries of life in the depths of its surroundings. It is in the compelling quiet of this land that they gave out their teachings in

infinite love and wisdom for the good of mankind. This is why the people of India seek after the Himalayas in order to spend the last days of their life in this time-honoured sacred land where reign purity and peace, harmony and bliss. This is the place where the body-idea melts down into nothingness and the last vestige of worldliness beats its hasty retreat.

The Himalayas echo the voice of Eternity which is soundless, touchless, formless, imperishable, and without taste or smell, without beginning or end, and immutable. The true nature of Eternity is not within the range of our ordinary perception; none can see It with the eyes, hear It with the ears, breathe It with the breath, express It in words, or comprehend It with the mind. The sages of India declare Its abode where the sun does not shine, nor the moon, nor the stars, nor these lightnings, and much less this fire. When It shines, everything shines after It, by Its light all this is lighted. It

sits still and yet moves far away. It is at perfect rest, and yet goes everywhere. Through every hand It works, through every foot It moves, through every eye It sees, and through every ear It hears, through every tongue It speaks, and through every mouth It eats.

Without a glimpse of Eternity, life is a bundle of miseries, the worldly relations are jarring, the human body is a rotten corpse. But with the touch of Eternity, life becomes full of meaning and its purpose, great and sacred. Then alone, every man's career becomes a joyous pilgrimage, cheerfulness prevails in the face of dangers and difficulties, and all souls proceed on, while seeking a common goal.

## II

The theme which reverberates in the atmosphere of the Himalayas is a burning spirit of renunciation, without which the realization of Eternity is next to impossible. Vyāsa, the author of the *Mahābhārata* depicts in wonderful imagery the idea of renunciation on the occasion of the Great Going Forth of the Pāndavas through the Himalayas to the blessed land of the gods. The five Pāndavas and Draupadi cast off their burden of royalty and worldly honours, and giving up all their attachment to worldly relations, they started for their final pilgrimage, while a dog suddenly came and followed in their footsteps. They clad themselves in robes of bark and being fired with the zeal of renunciation, began to proceed towards the furthest North, across the Himalayas. They saw in front of them a vast sandy desert along which they walked slowly till all on a sudden Draupadi fell down dead. In that lonely place, Bhima wept aloud and asked Yudhishthira the reason of her fall. Yudhishthira replied, "She was partial in her

love, placing Arjuna first. She reaps the fruits of her partiality today." They went further and after some time, Sahadeva, the youngest brother fell to rise no more. On being questioned by Bhima, Yudhishthira said, "He never thought any one equal to him in wisdom. This is the cause of his fall." Then, as they resumed their march, Nakula being overwhelmed with grief on account of the death of Draupadi and Sahadeva, his twin brother, fell down on the way. When this news reached the ears of Yudhishthira, he said, "Nakula thought that none equalled him in beauty." Then Arjuna after some time slipped down and breathed his last. Bhima mourned and cried aloud. At this, Yudhishthira said, "Arjuna said he would kill all our foes in a single day. Although he boasted, he could not accomplish it. This is the reason why he fell." Then as they went further, Bhima himself dropped down and wept looking piteously at the eldest brother. Yudhishthira then said, "You were a voracious eater, and you were proud of your strength. You did never consider the wants of others at the time of eating. This is the reason why you have fallen."

Now, Yudhishthira, although separated from his brothers and Draupadi, did not give way to grief and despondency. He went on unshaken in his faith and spirit of renunciation; only the dog followed him to the end. Indra, the King of heaven, appeared before Yudhishthira with his chariot and asked him to ascend in it to heaven,—the reward for his great spiritual merit. Yudhishthira did not like to enjoy heaven without his beloved brothers and Draupadi. Indra said that they had already gone to heaven, but as he excelled them in his piety, he was allowed to ascend to heaven in his very physi-

cal body. Yudhishthira said to Indra, "O Lord, this dog you see with me is devoted to me. I cannot leave it, it must accompany me." Indra shuddered at the idea and replied, "O King, you have won heaven by so much pains and good fortune. Why are you going to lose it by taking the dog with you? There is no place for a dog in heaven. Please do forsake it and enjoy the fruits of your righteousness." Yudhishthira then said, "O Indra, I am an Arya and an Arya cannot do an act unworthy of himself. I do not desire to enjoy heaven by deserting one who is devoted to me." At this, Indra said indignantly, "There is no room in heaven for persons with dogs, forsake the dog." Yudhishthira still persisted in his arguments. Then Indra urged, "You have been able to renounce your own brothers and wife, can you not give up a dog for the sake of heaven?" Yudhishthira replied, "When my brothers and Draupadi died, I was unable to revive them, hence I had to abandon them, but so long as they lived, I was glad to remain with them. But, O Indra, I can on no account part with this dog who has sought my protection and is faithful to me." Indra paused a while at this steadiness of Yudhishthira and began to gaze at him with wondering eyes. Instantly the dog vanished and in its place appeared a celestial being who is known as Dharma, the dispenser of the fruits of men's actions. Dharma who had assumed the form of a dog in order to test the piety of Yudhishthira said to him, "I am well pleased with you. You deserve so well the regions of inexhaustible joy!"

The spirit of renunciation as exhibited by Yudhishthira was not something negative, dull, and callous, but the noblest of human virtues in which we find the happy blending of abso-

lute non-attachment with infinite love and kindness. Today we find people carping at the spirit of renunciation, some of whom do not hesitate to cast invectives against the people who support it for the sake of spiritual growth. There are nowadays awfully mistaken ideas about this virtue of renunciation. People generally take it to be a cowardly sentiment or an unsympathetic attitude towards the world and its relations. To realize the realm of Eternity requires an all-embracing heart which alone can comprehend the true spirit of the spiritual life. The critics of the principle of non-attachment ought to mark the climax of fellow-feeling and love for all, in the lives of men like Buddha and Vivekananda. The realization of Eternity presupposes perfect withdrawal which is impossible without perfect non-attachment. It was impossible for Yudhishthira to give up the dog, as it was not possible for him to have any attachment to his dear brothers and his wife. Perfect love is possible only when there is perfect self-abnegation.

### III

The instinct of personification is common to all men. Of all men, the Hindus seem to have highly developed the imagination of seeing everything in terms of human figures. They made Indra the god of the sky, Varuna the god of water and so forth; likewise they personified the Himalayas as the King of mountains. In the legends of India, we find Siva being described as the lord of the great ice-peak of Kailâsa. At the same time, he has been conceived as a being of perfect self-control, a husband devoted to his dear wife, and also as a recluse of complete renunciation. Again, he has been thought of as the Great God of the

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## THE MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH & MISSION

*(At the inauguration of the Ramakrishna birth centenary celebrations  
on 24th February last)*

The dawn of the New Age is breaking over the world—the blessed day that will illumine our hearts with the glory of its effulgence is at hand.

Knowingly or unknowingly man is moving forward along the path of salvation inspired by the Master's message of the harmony of all religions and by his unique realization of the essential oneness of Karma (action), Jñāna (knowledge), Bhakti (supreme devotion) and Yoga (psychic control). The day is not far off when all lands and seas shall witness the establishment of a universal kingdom of peace, and when in loving response to the call of the Master, all nations and peoples, in one glorious confederation joining, shall sing with jubilant acclaim, yea, with no heat of strife and no passion of controversy, the Master's message—“As many faiths, so many paths.” Then the full meridian light of the Master's advent will light up this world of ours and that song will ring from end to end, and the sons and daughters of men will stand side by side under the banner of the New Age in spiritual comradeship.

May the citizens of the world on this blessed day understand the meaning of the Master's coming and be hallowed. This and this alone is my fervent prayer.

*Peace, peace, peace unto all.*



# SWAMI VIVEKANANDA IN OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

(From 'The Oakland Enquirer')

Friday, February 23, 1900

## A DISTINGUISHED HINDOO

*Swami Vivekananda, Teacher of the Vedānta Philosophy, to Speak Here Sunday Night*

Swami Vivekananda, a distinguished Hindoo lecturer and teacher of the Vedānta philosophy, arrived in San Francisco last evening from Los Angeles. He expects to remain here several weeks teaching and lecturing, and will occupy the pulpit of the First Unitarian Church next Sunday evening, in the parliament of religions which is being held there. He represents the order of Sannyāsins, a travelling priesthood, which inculcates its philosophy, after the Hindoo fashion, to learners wherever found, whether at the plough, the bench or in pilgrimage. The Swami is a man of profound learning in the line of psychology and the philosophy of Eastern religions.

Saturday, February 24, 1900

## A MAN OF MARK

*Swami Vivekananda, A Remarkable Oriental  
An Eloquent Expounder of the Faith of Brahminism*

When the Congress of Religions was held in Chicago in connection with the World's Fair in 1893 several remarkable men from the Orient appeared, including H. Dharmapala of Ceylon, v. Zitsuzā Ashitzu, Narasima Chariā. and Professor C. N. Chakravarti. But the most remarkable exemplar of orientalism was the Swami Vivekananda, a Hindoo who stands for the Brahmin

religion, or Vedantism as he prefers to call it.

Those who heard Vivekananda at Chicago have been enthusiastic in praise of his power as an orator. He is a large, fine looking man who has an excellent command of English and is a master of elocutionary effects. After the Chicago parliament Vivekananda lectured to thronged houses in the large cities of this country and then returned to India, where he was received with extraordinary honours. It seems the simple-minded people of India had heard of Vivekananda's success in America and had exaggerated it so much that they believed he had converted the whole American Continent and in particular had rescued the United States from the errors of Christianity, as they considered them.

So when he reappeared among his friends they hailed him as the deliverer of the Western world and, being wrought up with excess of enthusiasm they took Vivekananda in their arms and it is said that he was passed from village to village and city to city until he had been transported seventeen miles without his feet having once touched the ground.

Vivekananda is now in the United States a second time for a tour of some of the large cities. Swami means monk of the order of Sannyāsins. Viveka means "discrimination" and ananda means "bliss". The Swami comes to Oakland tomorrow to deliver his address at the local congress of religions in the evening at the Unitarian Church but Rev. B. F. Mills hopes to arrange with him to deliver a course of lectures here.

The Swami claims to belong to "the most ancient order of monks in the world" and his faith he characterizes as "the mother of religion". Vedantism is the religion of the Vedas, or the ancient Hindoo books. In one of his Chicago addresses Vivekananda said: "Hindoos have received their religion from the revelation of the Vedas. They hold that the Vedas are without beginning and without end. It may sound ludicrous to this audience—how a book can be without beginning or end; but by the Vedas no books are meant. They mean the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws discovered by different persons in different times."

In another address at the same place the Swami said: "I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal tolerance, but we accept all religions to be true. I am proud to tell you that I belong to a religion into whose sacred language, the Sanskrit, the word exclusion is untranslatable."

The following brief extract from one of the Swami's speeches gives an idea of his style as well as of his doctrine:

"So, then, the Hindoo believes that he is a spirit. Him the sword cannot pierce, him the fire cannot burn, him the water cannot melt, him the air cannot dry. He loves every soul is a circle whose circumference is nowhere, but whose centre is located in a body, and death means the change of this centre from body to body. In its very essence it is free, unbound, holy and pure, and perfect. But somehow or other it has got itself bound down by matter, and thinks of itself as matter.

"We are the children of God. The sharers of immortal bliss, holy and perfect beings. Ye divinities on earth, sinners! It is a sin to call a man so. It is a standing libel on human nature.

Come up, live, and shake off the delusion that you are sheep—you are souls immortal, spirits free and blest and eternal, ye are not matter, ye are not bodies. Matter is your servant, not you the servant of matter."

Monday, February 26, 1900

#### THE PHILOSOPHY OF VEDANTISM

*As Expounded by Swami Vivekananda  
Last Evening*

*A Vast Throng Attended His Address  
at The Unitarian Church  
Will Speak Again Wednesday Evening  
at Wendte Hall on Vedantism  
Christianity*

The announcement that Swami Vivekananda, a distinguished savant of the East would expound the philosophy of Vedantism in the Parliament of Religions at the Unitarian Church last evening, attracted an immense throng. The main auditorium and ante-rooms were packed, the annexed auditorium of Wendte Hall was thrown open and this was also filled to overflowing and it is estimated that fully 500 persons who could not obtain seats or standing room where they could hear conveniently, were turned away.

The Swami created a marked impression. Frequently he received applause during the lecture, and upon concluding held a levee of enthusiastic admirers. He said in part, under the subject of "The Claims of Vedantism on the Modern World":

"Vedantism demands the consideration of the modern world. The largest number of the human race are under its influence. Again and again, millions upon millions have swept down on its adherents in India, crushing them with their great force, and yet the religion lives.

"In all the nations of the world can such a system be found? Others have

risen to come under its shadow. Born like mushrooms, today they are alive and flourishing and tomorrow they are gone. Is this not the survival of the fittest?

"It is a system not yet complete. It has been growing for thousands of years and is still growing. So I can give you but an idea of all I would say in one brief hour.

"First, to tell you of the history of the rise of Vedântism. When it arose India had already perfected a religion. Its crystallization had been going on many years. Already there were elaborate ceremonies; already there had been perfected a system of morals for the different stages of life. But there came a rebellion against the mummeries and mockeries that enter into many religions in time, and great men came forth to proclaim through the Vedas the true religion. Hindoos received their religion from the revelation of these Vedas. They were told that the Vedas were without beginning and without end. It may sound ludicrous to this science—how a book can be without beginning or end; but by the Vedas no books are meant. They mean the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws discovered by different persons in different times.

"Before these men came, the popular ideas of a God ruling the universe, and that man was immortal were in existence. But there they stopped. It was thought that nothing more could be known. Here came the daring of the founders of Vedântism. They knew that religion meant for children is not good for thinking men; that there is something more to man and God.

The moral agnostic knows only the eternal dead nature. From that he could form the law of the Universe. He might as well cut off my nose and

claim to form an idea of my whole body as argue thus.

"He must look within. The stars that sweep through the heavens, even the universe is but a drop in the bucket. Your agnostic sees not the greatest and he is frightened at the universe.

"The world of spirit is greater than all. The God of universe who rules—our Father, our Mother. What is this heathen mummory we call the world? There is misery everywhere. The child is born with a cry upon its lips; it is its first utterance. This child becomes a man, and so well used to misery that the pang of the heart is hidden by a smile on the lips.

"Where is the solution of this world? Those who look outside will never find it; they must turn their eyes inward and find truth. Religion lives inside.

"One man preaches if you chop your head off you get salvation. But does he get anyone to follow him? Your own Jesus says, 'Give all to the poor and follow me.' How many of you have done this? You have not followed out this command, and yet Jesus was the great teacher of your religion. Every one of you are practical in your own life and you find this would be impracticable.

"But Vedântism offers you nothing that is impracticable. Every science must have its own matter to work upon. Everyone needs certain conditions and much of training and learning; but any Jack in the street can tell you all about religion. You may want to follow religion and follow an expert, but you may only care to converse with Jack, for he can talk it.

"You must do with religion as with science, come in direct contact with facts and on that foundation build a marvellous structure.

"To have a true religion you must have instruments. Belief is not in the

question; of faith you can make nothing, for you can believe anything.

"We know that in science as we increase the velocity the mass decreases; and as we increase the mass the velocity decreases. Thus we have matter and force. The matter we do not know disappears into force, and force into matter. Therefore there is something which is neither force nor matter, as these two may disappear into each other. This is what we call mind—the universal mind.

"Your body and my body are separate, you say. I am but a little whirlpool in the universal ocean of mankind. A whirlpool, it is true, but a part of the great ocean.

"You stand by moving water where every particle is changing, and yet you call it a stream. The water is changing, it is true, but the banks remain the same. The mind is not changing, but the body—how quick its growth! I was a baby, a boy, a man, and soon I will be an old man, stooped and aged. The body is changing, and you say is the mind not changing also? When I was a child I was thinking, I have become larger because my mind is a sea of impressions.

"There is behind nature a universal

mind. The spirit is simply a unit and it is not matter. For man is a spirit. The question, 'Where does the soul go after death?' should be answered like the boy when he asked, 'Why does not the earth fall down?' The questions are alike, and their solutions alike, for where could the soul go to?

"To you who talk of immortality I would ask when you go home to endeavour to imagine you are dead. Stand by and touch your dead body. You cannot, for you cannot get out of yourself. The question is not concerning immortality, but as to whether Jack will meet his Jenny after death.

"The one great secret of religion is to know for yourself that you are a spirit. Do not cry out, 'I am a worm. I am nobody!' As the poet says, 'I am existence, knowledge and truth.' No man can do any good in the world by crying out, 'I am one of its evils.' The more perfect the less imperfections you see."

At the conclusion of the address Rev. Mills announced that Swami Vivekananda would speak again on Wednesday evening instead of Tuesday as had been announced. His subject would be Points of Resemblance between Vedantism and Christianity.

## UNITY IN HUMANITY

BY THE EDITOR

### I

The most pressing question that has engaged the attention of great thinkers of the world since the end of the Great War is how to promote a better understanding among nations, how to create conditions that may give rise to the morality that would accompany scientific achievements of the day, how to

increase the material comfort of teeming millions, and also how prevent the means of slaughtering men. When the War came to a close with the loss of millions of souls, the unemployment of millions of men and women, the crippling of trade, commerce, and industries the world over, and the piling up of crushing debts of billions of pounds by

suffering nations, serious-minded people supposed that men would regard it as a warning and honestly carry on propaganda for a better state of things. Two decades have passed, and one may now feel the pulse of the dominant nations of today and see if their malevolent passions have lessened or increased, if the modern world drifts towards a benevolent construction or an abysmal destruction. The current events of the world show ample proofs for the facts that national rivalries are smouldering, the less warlike races are being forced into the arena of war, and the more warlike races are being trained for more dangerous wars. It appears that sooner or later nations will taste the extremity of passions that make for universal ruin and the suicide of the modern civilization. Therefore, the right-thinking men in all civilized countries are trying in various ways to promote human brotherhood, in the face of absurd rivalries, cruel oppressions, and ridiculous ambitions. They are endeavouring to discern the living bonds of common history and culture which unite the whole of mankind.

## II

Different thinkers have traced the unrest prevailing in the modern world to different causes. All of them agree to the fact that civilization is in the melting pot and that thinking men and women in every part of the world are revolting against established forms of national, social, and industrial life. All are crying for a new social order, a new culture, and a new philosophy of life.

There are people who say that the scientific knowledge of the present age is not accompanied by the moral vision and the breadth of outlook, so necessary for the progress of mankind as a whole. In this connection, we

may have a clear idea of the position of science in the words of Bertrand Russell: "Science has shown us how to achieve our immediate purposes far more successfully than former ages would have deemed possible. We can manufacture commodities with a hundredth of the labour required in pre-industrial times; we can move on the surface of the earth with ten times the velocity of a hundred years ago; we can fly better than birds, and move under water faster than fishes. Unfortunately the intellectual powers which have led to these achievements are not accompanied by corresponding moral powers. Our aims have not advanced *pari passu* with our capacity to realize them. The dominant nations of the world have used their scientific knowledge for two purposes: to increase the material comfort of the wealthy minority, and to perfect the means of slaughtering each other." People who hold such a view rightly suggest that the powers that science has given to man can be used not merely to afford pleasure to those who govern, but also to those who are governed. It should be the duty of the people who cultivate science or apply the scientific knowledge for their own purposes, to acquire "some reverence for human feelings and some tenderness towards the emotions that give colour to the daily existence of men and women". It is undoubtedly the gift of science that man has been able to a great extent to emancipate himself from his subjection to nature. But civilized man is now behaving like a "slave-turned-master". In order to save the situation, there is no better way than to substitute passions that make for co-operation and mutual happiness in the place of the passions that make for the exploitation of the weak. Various movements have been set on foot in India and abroad to deepen the

passions that work for the greater interests of humanity. Western science needs to be wedded to Eastern spirituality so that new ideals of life may bring about great improvements in the cultural life of modern nations. "In the East", says Bertrand Russell, "there is more hope. All the great religions have come from the East; the West has ignored them in practice even while it paid homage to them in its professions. In industrialism the West has at last found something which it could worship without insincerity; through being worshipped as divine, industrialism has become a demonic power. The East will be compelled to use industrialism, but may avoid worshipping it. If so, it may give birth to the new outlook that the world requires." Thus it appears that men are at the portals of a promising era which can be born, only when the best fruits of Western energy and Eastern idealism will combine into a new science of morals. It will cause a spiritual revolution and effect a re-valuation and re-interpretation of life. In that case, men have to create and inhabit a new world by outgrowing their present environment. It will not then be making blind sallies into the unknown, but looking abroad for a richer experience in life. Men of the East and the West need not altogether give up their old principles but have to strive for a fuller consciousness and a wider experience. Hence there is no risk of losing what they have individually, rather there is the chance of gaining the opportunity they need and the satisfaction that humanity seeks. The world requires a venture like this—a new relationship between the East and the West.

### III

Some people argue that so long as nations are held down by the sword, there can be no peace on earth that

will last. They insist that in the interest of humanity justice and freedom must reign in the world of man. They echo the famous words of the great American, Abraham Lincoln: "No man is good enough to rule another man, and no nation is good enough to rule another nation. For a man to rule himself is liberty; for a nation to rule itself is liberty. But for either to rule another is tyranny. If any nation robs another nation of its freedom it does not deserve freedom for itself, and under a just God it will not long retain it." People who support such idealism consider that in spirit of various differences in race, colour, creed, and language men belong to one world and one human family and that no nation without loss and injury to itself, can be indifferent to the interests of any other nation. It means that the great family of individuals, races, and nations must learn to live together in peace and goodwill. The people who are cosmopolitan in their outlook and believe in God as the Maker of all nations ask all men point-blank: To whom does the Earth belong? Does it belong to the strong in muscles and to the shrewd in intellect? Does it belong to those who can exploit and conquer their neighbours? The *Bible* answers: "The Earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." and "God hath made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell upon the face of the Earth." Buddha taught human brotherhood and preached against slavery in any form to any class of human beings. Jesus exhorted his disciples in the same strain to cherish and cultivate friendliness towards their neighbours. But in spite of these teachings of the prophet-souls, the modern idea of nationality is extremely narrow and antagonistic to other nations. Because certain people love their own nation is no reason why they should hate

encroach upon other nations. People indignantly ask: What is there in nationality that should destroy the larger interests of humanity? There can be no justification for a man taking pride in his patriotism, when he engages himself in a war, without considering its character, however unjust or inhuman. This is why men should no longer vindicate the virtue of patriotism when it is based on untruth, greed, and hatred. In the case of an individual man, it is sinful and criminal to take possession of others' property by unjust and illegitimate means. In the case of a nation then, how can those means be justified? If nations desire peace, they must neither antagonize one another nor depend only upon armies and navies for safety. Safety can hardly be won by filling the world with armaments. As there is no greater wisdom for a man than to live with a keen sense of justice, so there is no greater policy for a nation than to live with a lofty standard of equity. Justice gives an invincible power, not only to individuals but to nations also. Men seem too civilized now to believe in the ways of Justice. "In this, man's world," said Thomas Carlyle, "with its wild, whirling eddies, and its mad foam oceans, where men and nations perish as without law, and judgment for an unjust thing is sternly payed, dost thou think that there is therefore no justice? That is what the Lord hath said in his heart. I tell thee there is nothing else but justice. The strongest thing I find here below: the true thing, the true thing." All scriptures of the world declare that there is an Intelligent Power that has made this world. If it be so, that Power cannot rest indifferent to the workings of the machine that He has constructed. He must be a person of infinite knowledge and capacity, as

such He must have vigilant eyes upon the destiny of not only individual men but upon that of nations also. If He be the Invisible King, His Kingdom must rest on nothing else but justice, since He has no selfish desire to be fulfilled through agencies of the world. If justice be the law in the Kingdom of God, it must have its sway in the world of man too, as His Kingdom extends all over the universe. If the Kingdom of God be a myth, individuals and nations governing this world must be a far greater myth than could ever be invented by human intellect. People may think that it is a device meant only for leading fools, but those who live in the light of God discern the hand of God in the affairs of nations as truly as in those of individual men. It is often argued that if God rules over all, why does He not set things right and interfere in the actions of tyrants, oppressors, and exploiters? Longfellow meets this argument and sings:

"The mills of God grind slowly but they grind exceeding small;

Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all."

Man expects God to behave and act according to his own code of conduct and his own standard. He wishes that God might come down to the level of human judgment and understanding. This is the reason why many men have no belief in His existence, far more in His rule over humanity. It must be remembered that God is not God, if He behaves like man and decides things with the finite knowledge of man. Even when God works through any man, not in the wide sense as He dwells in all and acts through all, but in the restricted sense of a Divine Incarnation, He acts with unlimited wisdom and power.

So it is obvious that right belief in the existence of God and righteous con-

universe and lastly as the Most High where there is no trace of any personality.

It was a great characteristic with the sages of India to give mankind various gradations of Truth suited to different temperaments. A beginner is not expected to catch the culminating point of Truth all at once. So, it is always advisable for a teacher to lead an unripe mind gradually from grosser to finer ways of perception and realization. This is the method which the great seers of ancient India adopted in preaching the truths of the spiritual life. They knew the keynote of human psychology and so gave a new seeker after Truth human approaches to It. This is why we find in the case of Siva, first the picture of a man of self-control, next an ideal husband, then an ideal hermit, afterwards a god of the three worlds, and last of all, a transcendental being. It is but natural for man to think of God in human ways, to think of Him as possessing human frailties. Again it is for him also to conceive Him as One transcending human blemishes, rather as reaching the very perfection of human attributes—at last merging into the Divine. It has been rightly remarked by Sister Nivedita: "Of all the peoples of the earth, it might be claimed that Hindus are apparently the most, and at heart, the least idolatrous. For the application of their symbols is many-centred, like the fire in opals."

We shall now see how the vision of the Himalayas with their snowy peaks and awe-inspiring surroundings led the Hindu mind to carve out of them a hermit whose body being besmeared with ashes is as white as snow, sitting alone in unbroken meditation with his matted hair. The hermit is oblivious of heat or cold and lives far away from

human habitations. He is so much immersed in the thought of Eternity that serpents coil round his neck, wild animals surround him, and ghosts and goblins move about him. He is so good as not to be affected by praise or blame, love or hatred, good or evil. He has full control not only over his own senses but he can tolerate the weaknesses and eccentricities of the people around him. In his forehead, there is the third eye, the eye of insight which resembles the silvery moon shining on the snow-white peaks of the Himalayas. He is a beggar, though he possesses the power of commanding things at his will. He becomes very easily pleased with the people who come to see him, and he is very bounteous in his benedictions. He wears round his waist a tiger's skin and holds in his hands the begging bowl and the trident. He lives upon what chance brings him and always sings the glories of Eternity as "Byom! Byom!" to the accompaniment of his musical instrument, Damaru. When he is absorbed in meditation, its intensity can be well described in the language of Kālidāsa, the Shakespeare of India: "The trees stopped swinging their boughs, the bees silenced their humming noise, the birds left off singing in the trees, the deer stopped their roaming; the whole face of the forest looked as if painted on a canvas, as soon as he gave the command." Once tempted by Madan, the god of love, during his meditation, he burnt him to ashes by a mere glance. Such is Siva, proof against mortal weakness, and this is the picture of the prince of hermits so devoutly cherished in the hearts of Indian men and women. The Himalayas are the fit place for his meditation and absorption in the thought of Eternity.

Again, Siva is pictured as the husband of his beloved wife Sati and lives



happily in his holy home of Kailâsa with Ganesha and Kârtikeya as his sons, and Lakshmi and Saraswati as his daughters. He there possesses a bull to ride upon and has a devoted servant, named Nandi. He gives shelter to all beings, even the most wicked of them, whom the world rejects. He has infinite love for his wife whose tragic death made him bear her body on his shoulders and go about in the world in great lamentations.

## IV

Now if we turn from the mythological stories to the philosophical aspect of the principle, we find that the soul of the universe is associated with Siva and the manifested energy of the universe with Sakti, the consort of Siva. It is the relation of God to Nature, or the relation of Spirit to matter. It is just like the word and its meaning, like fire and its burning power, like milk and its whiteness; they are indivisibly one

and inseparable. Siva is the life and light of the universe and Sakti, the primal force, eternally creating, preserving and destroying the universe in conjunction with the former. It can be very well put in the words of Sister Nivedita: "As the knight waits for the sight of his own lady, powerless without the inspiration of her touch, as the disciple waits for the master, and finds in him at last the meaning of all his life before, so the soul lies inert, passive, unstirred by the external, till the great moment comes, and it looks up at the shock of some divine catastrophe, to know in a flash that the whole of the without,—the whole of life, and time, and nature, and experience—like the within, is also God." This vision of the inseparable two again merges into one entity—Siva, the one without a second, immutable, and all-pervading, the one Eternity which is the voice of the Himalayas and the voice for all time to come.

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## WORLD-CULTURE IN INDIA TODAY\*

BY PROF. BENROY KUMAR SARKAR

Indian intellectuals have been following with great interest the news items to the effect that the scholars of Eur-America and Japan are planning to celebrate the Ramakrishna Centenary in February, 1936, in their own culture-centres in a spirit of co-operation with the people of India. The attitude of this *rapprochement* from far and near invites our attention to a great fact of modern world-culture, namely, that India today is a sub-continent which is

oriented to the two hemispheres in a thoroughly appreciative manner. The creative assimilation of world-forces by India is a subject which should prove to be of interest to the East and the West at the present moment.

Rammohun Roy (1772-1833), the father of New India, was also like Herder and Comte one of the founders of the comparative method in social science. He was thus a maker of the modern world. Since then every movement with which the Indian nation-builders have been associated has been broad-based on world-culture. And

\* See the present author's "Realities in the Relations between East and West" (*Prabuddha Bharata*, February, 1934).

Rammohun in inviting Western culture into Indian consciousness and according to it the rightful place it deserves in all human development was only continuing the historic tradition of India's old masters, e.g., of Varāhamihira (c 505-587 A.C.). This astronomer of the sixth century had frankly admitted that although the Greeks were *Mlechchhas* (i.e. "unclean barbarians") they must have to be worshipped as *Rishis* (sages) because the science of astronomy had made great progress among them. Openness of mind is not a new feature in Indian *Weltanschauung*.

A veritable *Wanderlust* corresponding to the *Charādivcti* (march on) of old (*Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* VII. 15) and desire to master the world-forces (*Vishva-shakti*) such as is bodied forth in Hem-chandra Banerji's memorable verse (c 1886) has long seized the mentality of Young India, as follows :

"Take thee to the ocean's deeps;  
And crowns of mountains scramble bold;  
Planets of the universe  
Ransacked be merciless;  
Tempests and meteors,  
Flame of lightning fierce,  
Grasp, man, audacious-firm,  
Venture, then, on life's work!"

And the comparative method foreshadowed in the life's work of Rammohun is so ingrained in India's *psyche* that the principle of boycott which operates once in a while in the sphere of politics as a weapon for freedom and equality has hardly any application in the cultural enterprises of Indian men and women.

The number of Indians who visit Japan, America, England, France, Germany, and Italy for industrial, technocratic, and economic investigations has been steadily on the increase, especially since the *Swadeshi* Movement of 1905.

India does not study the advance of

modern capitalism alone. The other side of the shield, namely, socialism in all its wings,—St. Simon, Owen, Marx, Engels, Kautsky, Sorel, Lenin, Cole,—has been receiving equal attention among the Indian path-finders.

In the appreciation of the world's celebrities, again, India does not make any distinction between nationalities. The Washington Day and the Goethe Day were celebrated at different centres in India in 1932. In 1933 Indian scholars in philosophy paid homage to the spirit of Spinoza. Firdausi's memory was honoured in 1934. Homage is being paid to Carnegie this year.

*Wanderlust* or modern *Charādivcti* has already had solid influence on thought. The methodology of Voltaire's *Lettres Philosophiques*, in which a foreign land is idealized as the depositary of all possible cultural and political bliss, has more or less been at work in the Indian journalism and travel-literature such as comes from the pen of authors who have lived in Eur-America and Japan. Writers on foreign institutions and life are quite popular.

The painters and sculptors of Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras do not seek their technique exclusively from old Buddhistic and medieval Indo-Persian sources. The great masters of Japan and China as well as of Europe have profoundly influenced the work of Abanindra Nath Tagore, Nanda Lal Bose, M. K. Mhatre and Phanindra Nath Bose.

Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, Victor Hugo, Walt Whitman, Browning, Ibsen, Yeats, Dostoyevski, and Gorki call forth among Indians the same enthusiasm as among the Westerners. Helmholtz, Pasteur, John Stuart Mill, Bergson, William James, Croce, Einstein,—they all have thousands of admirers and followers in India. The great philosophers of Germany from

Kant, Fichte and Hegel to Haeckel and Eucken are as popular in India as her own masters. Indeed, there are hardly any world-currents to which modern India does not react in a creative manner.

For instance, the growth of a "Greater America" of culture and commerce on the Indian sub-continent may be appraised as a profound reality of contemporary civilization. And this expansion of America in India has been promoted by Americans and Indians alike. The beginnings of the Agricultural Institute at Pusa were laid with American money. The Rockefeller Institute of Hygiene at Calcutta is an embodiment of American idealism. Co-operation of Indian capital with American is to be found in the Tata Hydro-electric Works. The origins of the Tata Iron and Steel Works likewise were to a certain extent due to Indo-American collaboration. The investment of American capital in jute and other enterprises is moreover an important factor in the Indian economy. Then there is to be noticed the work of American missionaries and educators in Indian hospitals and schools or colleges.

Indians themselves have not failed to appreciate and assimilate the contributions of American culture. It was our poet Hem Chandra Banerji who during the eighties of the last century was one of the first to draw our attention to the epoch-making energism of the American people. The activities of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement in the U.S.A. have enabled us to realize the value of American social ideals and institutions.

It is the American farms, factories, banks, business houses, industrial and commercial schools, and Universities on which Jogen Ghosh's Association for the Industrial and Scientific Education of Indians in Foreign Countries laid a

special stress during the glorious *Swadeshi* period (1905-10). The National Council of Education, Bengal likewise sought to Americanize Indian education, industry and business organization by imparting American methods and ideals through its scholars educated in the U.S.A. (1910-11). Nor have the Indian Universities under the creative leadership of Asutosh Mookerjee lagged behind in deriving inspiration from American institutions, books and journals. In mathematics, physics, chemistry, medicine, biology, anthropology, philosophy, statistics, economics, politics, sociology, banking, insurance, transportation, and what not American authors or translators from French and German have been permitted by the University authorities to invade the academic life. In so far as Young India's brain is nurtured on English thought it is today at least one third Americanized in methodology and outlook. Emerson, O. W. Holmes, James, Boas, Stanley Hall, Dewey, Seligman, Taussig, Mitchell, Small, Giddings, Lowie, Goldenweiser, Ross, Sorokin, Max Weber, Barnes, Hocking, Hankins as well as Carnegie, Edison, Ford, and other American names are to be counted among some of the enduring influences on Indian life and thought. To this list have to be added the names of Hopkins, Lanman, Bloomfield, Jackson, Laufer, Ryder, Clark, Edgerton, and other indologists, as well as Sunderland, J. H. Holmes, and other publicists.

Among the formative forces of Young India (c 1905-10) nothing can be described as having been more constructive and solid than the Japanese artist Kakasû Okakura's two books, *Ideals of the East* and *The Awakening of Japan*. Okakura may even be regarded as perhaps the greatest single foreign influence in the life and thought of

Indian intellectuals during the *Swadeshi* period in its first phases. Japan has taught India great lessons during the generation commencing with the Russo-Japanese War (1904). India's admiration for Japanese industry, efficiency, and diplomacy has grown from more to more all this time.

Since the end of the Great War, however, India has been encountering Japan more as a dangerous rival than as an inspiring guide. The glass, hosiery, porcelain and other industries of Bengal as well as the big textile industry of India have begun to experience a life-and-death struggle *vis-à-vis* the imports from Japan. But all the same, India is learning along with the world the old lesson over again, namely, that "peace hath her victories no less glorious than war." Even when the Great War came to an end (1918) neither Eur-America nor, of course, Asia could suspect that industrialization as well as technocracy were being mastered by Japan so adequately as to constitute in the near future a veritable "Japanese peril" in the estimation of commercial nations.

India understands, however, that with nothing more than three meals of rice and raw fish without milk and butter as the daily staple the Japanese people has demonstrated that it is possible to command the latest engines, machines, implements, and machine-tools, and challenge comparison with the pioneers of industrialism and capitalistic civilization. Japan is therefore still continuing to inspire the creative thinkers and organizers of the Indian people during the period of her new triumphs. Japan has influenced Indian thought not only by works like *Fifty Years of New Japan* edited by Okuma, Nitobe's *Bushido*, and the indological researches of Anesaki, Takakusu, Hattori, Suzuki, Sugiura, Otani, etc. but also on account of the demographic investigations of

Uyeda, the journals like the *Oriental Economist* (Tokyo) and the publications of the Bureau of Social Affairs (Home Office, Tokyo) in regard to "Social Work in Japan" (1934).

The civilization of France has had an abiding influence on the education and culture of Young India. From Descartes to Henri Poincaré, from Lamarck to Pasteur, from Molière to Maupassant, from Montesquieu and Saint Simon to Jean Jaurès, Gide and Bouglé, from Rousseau, Comte and Guizot to Bergson, Durkheim and Levy-Bruhl, from Corot to Cezanne and Rodin, from Montaigne to Anatole France, Romain Rolland and Henri Barbusse—the contributions of the French genius have conveyed to the Indian mind profound messages of spiritual value. And these are as varied and complex as are the different cross-sections of the Indian *intelligentsia* to which they are addressed. One can almost assert that after British thought no culture has left a greater impression upon the head and heart of Indian writers and scholars than have the creations of the French mind.

Then there are the French products in "indology". The indologists of Young India have derived immense benefit from the works of French savants relating to ancient India including "Greater India", especially China and Indo-China. The studies in *indianisme* of French antiquarians and philologists from Chezy, Bergaigne, and Burnouf to Barth, Sénart, Lévi, Foucher, Pelliot, Jules Bloch, Finot, Masson-Oursel, Renou, de la Vallée Poussin, Ph. Stern, and Grousset belong to the most substantial food of latter-day Indian scholars in philology, Buddhism, archæology, etc.

With French civilization the direct contacts of Young India on a large scale have to be traced back, of course, to the "ideas of 1905" but specially to the

happenings of the Great War when the Indian soldiers found themselves in Flanders and Northern France. Since then the intercourse has gone on expanding in diverse directions, cultural and social.

As representatives of *sciences morales et politiques*, comprising, as they do, in French thought economics also, Levasseur, Worms, Yves-Guyot, R. G. Lévy, Rist, Henry Sée, Truchy, Bousquet, Aftalion, André Siegfried, Bruhnes, Richard, Duprat, Hauser, Oualid, Joseph-Barthélemy, Nogaro, Gonnard, Bouthoul, and Lasbax have, it may be observed, already entered the domain of Indian research.

From the standpoint of technocracy and occupational structure Italy is not a "capitalistic" region but a land of "mixed" (i. e. agrar-industrial) and diversified economy, as Mussolini has made it clear in the speeches explaining the law of corporations (December 1933). In other words, Italy is nearer to India socio-economically than are Germany, Great Britain, and the U.S.A. This aspect of Italian economy has been gradually dawning upon the business world and economic thought in India.

So far as culture is concerned, Madhu Sudan Dutt, the greatest Bengali poet of the nineteenth century, was powerfully influenced by Italian creations. His *Meghnad-Vadha* bears the impress of Virgil and Dante. His sonnet to Petrarca is well-known. The Bengali prose-writer Jogindra Nath Vidya-bhushan wrote the biographies of Mazzini and Garibaldi. These two Italian celebrities have formed the subject matter of biography likewise in Marathi, Urdu, Hindi, and other Indian languages. The painter Sasi Kumar Hesh and the sculptor Gopeswar Pal also have derived inspiration and guidance from Italy.

India's contacts with Italy since the

middle of the nineteenth century, especially since the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, have been extensive. The visits of Indian scholars to Italian centres of art and science, during the twentieth century, especially since the end of the Great War (1914-18) have grown in number and frequency. It is during this the latest period that leaders of Italian life and thought such as Pantaleoni, Luzzatti, Croce, Formichi, Giorgio del Vecchio, Niceforo, Mortara, Gini, Gentile, Tucci, Graziani, and others have come forward to meet Indian scientists, poets, economists, philosophers, historians etc. halfway, so to say. The anti-malaria and anti-tuberculosis campaigns of Italy have been furnishing Indian social workers with constructive suggestions. Students of land-economics and rural reconstruction have been watching the Italian *bonifica integrale* enterprises with admiration and creative enthusiasm.

The contributions of "modern," i.e., Bismarckian and post-Bismarckian Germany to the economic and social welfare of mankind have been arresting the attention of the Indian *intelligentsia*. The German *Anerkennung* is the law relating to land by which equal partition among heirs (conceded as much by Roman as by Hindu jurisprudence) is forbidden. By its provisions the proprietor is authorized to "select" any one of his heirs (not necessarily the eldest son) to be the sole heir. At the same time the "selected" heir is compelled to pay off in cash or otherwise the other legal heirs. This German legislation is being appraised as eminently suitable for Indian conditions. *Sozialversicherung*, i.e., social insurance is another achievement of the German people to which Indian economists and statesmen are directing their attention. The *Berufs- und Fachschulwesen*, i.e., the system of professional and industrial

"subject-schools" for which the German business world is so noted has equally appealed to the technical experts and educators of India. Attention is also being directed to the *Soziale Frauenschulen*, i.e., the Social Welfare Schools for Women, whose importance for India cannot be overemphasized.

These are some of the latest counts on which German culture has been demanding the attention of Indian thinkers and practical men. As for pre-Bismarckian Germany it may be said that there was no universitarian in India during the nineteenth century who did not come under Goethe's influence. Hegel contributed much to the mentality of the reformers of Hinduism constituted under the Brâhmo Samâj. Not less influential were Kant and Schopenhauer. It is with the *Swadeshi* Movement (1905) that Young India began to take interest in the Germany of exact science, medicine, industry, technocracy, and business organization. Since then German science and industry have been well represented in Indian life. To the "ideas of 1905" Young India may be said to owe its discovery of Germany as the land of Frederick List, author of *Das Nationale System der Politischen Oekonomie*, and of Fichte, the philosopher of the "youth movement."

Since the end of the Great War the firms like Krupp, Borsig, Demag, M. A. N., Siemens-Schuckert, I. G. Farbenindustrie, Leuna-Werke, Junkers etc. have become some of the engineering and chemical realities of Indian experience. In and through the Reichsverband der deutschen Industrie, Verein deutscher Ingenieure, Verein deutscher Maschinenbauanstalten and other organizations it has been possible for Indians to catch glimpses of "rationalization" and the "second industrial revolution." Today in Indian thought German *Kultur*

is a living stream of contributions to nationalism and the world-forces from Herder to Hitler. It should be observed that in India, generally speaking, Austria,—no matter what be the fortunes of the *Anschluss* (union) question,—is taken as a member of the German culture-system. And the influence of this system on Indian culture is as profound and comprehensive as on any other culture-system of the world.

Kalidasa's *Sakuntalâ* was translated into German by Forster in 1791, and Herder introduced this German rendering to Goethe and Schiller. Schlegel's *Weisheit der Indier* (The Wisdom of the Indians) was published in 1808 and Bopp's studies in comparative grammar between 1816 and 1852. Since then indology has been sedulously cultivated in very many of the 23 Universities of Germany, and the results of researches by German indologists have to a certain extent filtered down to the non-Sanskritists, general intellectuals and even the *Volk* of Germany. This reputation of Germany for indology was already a great force among the Indian intellectuals even previous to 1905. The Germans were regarded as in a somewhat special sense the Sanskritists, the Pandits or Brâhmanas of Eur-America. This position was created for them, among other reasons, on account of the employment of a large number of German scholars, Aufrecht, Hultzsch, Kielhorn, Oppert, etc.,—in the Archaeological Department of the Government of India.

It is very interesting that when Kautalya's *Arthasâstra* was discovered in 1905 the question of its authenticity was left with the German Brâhmanas to decide. This dependence on the German Pandits in matters relating to Indian culture was a feature in the scholarship of the British historian Vincent Smith. In the third edition of

the *Early History of India* (Oxford 1914, p. 153) his chief support in regard to the Kautilya question is found to be the "researches of German scholars", which have "clearly established", as he thought, "that the *Arthasāstra* is *echt und alt*" (genuine and old). In Keith's *History of Sanskrit Literature* (Oxford 1928), also, the influence of German indology is patent at almost every page. It is not strange, therefore, that even those Indians who do not know the German language and cannot read, for instance, a work like Windisch's entitled *Geschichte der Sanskritphilologie und Indischen Altertumskunde* Vol. I. (Strasbourg 1917) and Vol. II. (Berlin 1920) should cherish extraordinary conceptions about Germany's contributions to the study of Indian culture.

In recent years (1920-35) the intimate contacts between Indian and German indologists have served but to maintain those ideas intact. Equipped as some Indian indologists today are with a knowledge of the German language they are cultivating a first hand acquaintance with the publications of Zimmer, Lassen, Deussen, Garbe, Hillebrandt, von LeCoq, Jolly, Jacobi, Leuders, Geiger, Wuest, Hauer, Schrader, Schubring, Nobel, Zimmer jun, and others. The interest of von Glasenapp and Reinhard Wagner in the languages and topics of modern India is a new feature in German indology. The humanistic approach to and secularization of indology in the researches of Hillebrandt, Fick, Meyer, and Breloer have been attracting the notice of Indian scholars.

Among those interested in economics, statistics and social science the publications of Sering, Toennies, Diehl, Eugen Fischer, Spranger, Sombart, Schumpeter, Herkner, Adolf Weber, von Wiese, Zehn, Wagemann, Zwiedineck, Matschoss, Spann, Haushofer, Schumacher, Burgdoerfer, Lotz, Manes,

Waffenschmidt, Freyer, Koellreutter, Baxa, and others are gradually getting known as contributions likely to introduce Indian scholars to fruitful methods of investigation.

The most important cultural influences on India from the Russian side have been in the fields of literature and social philosophy. Tolstoy was already a force among the Indian *intelligentsia* in the nineteenth century. The establishment of the Duma by the Czar as an aftermath of the first Russian revolution engendered by the failures in the war with Japan (1904-05) was synchronous with the *Swadeshi* Movement in India and could not fail to be a source of inspiration in the Indian constitutional struggle. The treatment of social questions as a feature of Russian literature was discussed through the pages of the monthly *Grihastha* (1912-13). Dostoyevski and Turgenev were introduced through the same journal during the war of 1914-1918. The *Swadeshi* Movement in India was characterized by the enthusiasm for industrialization, on the one hand, and by that for folk-movements, rural service, village reconstruction, and cottage industry, on the other. In regard to this second aspect Kropotkin's *Fields, Factories, and Workshops* was a formative force. Down to the end of the Great War, however, Russian interests were confined to a handful of stargazers and culture-pioneers.

Russia became a power in the world of culture in the two hemispheres with the establishment of the Soviet regime in November 1917. But it was not before the American or rather the British translators, authors, and publishers rendered the Russian revolution intelligible to the English-speaking world from diverse angles of vision that Indian journalists, undergraduates, and schoolboys could assimilate its contents and

utilize them for their own nourishment. By 1925 Russia was perhaps established in India as a culture-force. Post-Lenin Russia has drawn a number of Indian travellers to Moscow.

Curiously enough, the greatest single pro-Russian factor in contemporary India has been Gandhi's doctrine of non-cooperation. No matter what be his own views regarding Communism, Bolshevism, or Sovietism his propaganda in favour of Tolstoy's non-violence and condemnation of the state during 1919-22 was synchronous with Lenin's *divvijaya* in Russia and thus served to render Leninism popular in India.

But as yet hardly any Indian contributions on Russia are based on a knowledge of the original Russian language. However, today there are as many political or socialist parties in the different provinces of India among the labourites, congressmen, and other publicists *visà-vis* Stalin and Trotzky as there are in the British Isles or indeed in other countries where freedom of opinion is more or less tolerated. Besides, the progress of the two *Gosplans* (Five Year Plans) is being watched by India through Anglo-American eyes with the greatest interest.

It has to be observed, further, that Indian researchers in medicine, mathematics, and the other exact sciences have some contact with the scientific contributions of contemporary Russia. One must not overlook the Russian indologists who have continued to be a force among the intellectuals of India from the days of Oldenbourg and the *St. Petersburg Dictionary of Sanskrit* to Minayeff, Vostrikov, Obermiller, Stecherbatsky, Przyluoki, and Nicholas Roerich.

Czechoslovakia is a "new country" created by the surgeons of the Versailles Treaty (1918-19) out of the womb of Central Europe. But she was born

almost like a Minerva equipped with all the paraphernalia of modernism. As the inheritor of all that Austrian (and German) technocracy, science, and organization have to offer to mankind, Czechoslovakia has been accepted by Young India almost as a little Germany, or in any case, something like a Switzerland of Mid-Eastern Europe. Prague is gradually being appreciated by the Indian *intelligentsia* as but second only to Vienna in the entire "Balkan complex", so to say, between the Baltic and the Black Seas.

As the Indian mind today is predominantly industrial and scientific, Czechoslovakia among all the "new states" has happened to monopolize the attention of Indian publicists. This is perhaps the only new culture-area with which the post-war geography of Europe has enriched the mentality of intellectuals in India.

And India's interest in Czechoslovakia is likely to expand in the near future. The reasons are very objective and realistic. Following the example of America, Germany and other countries Czechoslovakia has been offering facilities to dozens of Indians for training in workshops. Besides, within the boundaries of India itself Czechoslovak enterprises, like the Bata Shoe Company, has been meeting Indians in a spirit of constructive co-operation. In 1932 this Company established a factory at Konnagar on the Ganges, a few miles north of Calcutta. Today a large town is being built to the south of Calcutta, —to be called Batanagar—in order to accommodate much enlarged workshops, furnished with an employment capacity of 5,000 hands. From American concerns in India likewise Indians have been deriving similar benefits.

Czechoslovakia is not exclusively a nation of shoe-makers or glass bangle manufacturers and armament supplies



nor are the Indians all materialists. There are other items in Czechoslovak culture from which India has been deriving considerable inspiration. The rural hygiene of Czechoslovakia, the physical exercises associated with the Sokol movement, and Benes's activities at the League of Nations as well as in connection with the "Little Entente" have not been without some influence on Indian thought. Lesny's interest in Bengali language and literature, Czech-Czechenherz's interpretation of Indian culture through stories, Hujer's lectures and writings on India are being followed by the Indian journalists and educators with attention. Among indologists, of course, Winternitz because of his *History of Indian Literature* and Stein because of his studies in Kautalya are two of the attractions in Prague.

The International Congress of Philosophy at Prague in 1934 did not fail to bring to India's notice the positivistic tendencies of J. B. Kozak and the critical realism of Em. Radl. *La Philosophie Tchechoslovaque Contemporaine* (1935), dealing as it does with the philosophical contributions of Czechoslovak thinkers since 1918, will be the starting point of India's renewed and somewhat steady interest in this field. As for the older items in Bohemian culture, the establishment of the Prague University in 1348, the martyrdom of Hus (1418), the educational philosophy of Komensky (Comenius 1592-1671), Drobavsky's revival of the Czech language (c 1805), Havlicek's enthusiasm for Mazzini in the movement of 1848, Kollar's interest in Herder (c 1850),—all these have some meaning in India today.

Last but not least, Indians are acquainted with the energism of the grand old man, President Masaryk, the father of Czechoslovakia. Masaryk, the democrat and liberal statesman as well

as the humane servant of his people, is well established in the affections of the Indian public as an idealist and a constructive social worker. In the story of his growth from the period of *The Czech Question* (1894) to *The Making of a State* (1925-27) Indians can follow the slow transformation of a mystical and non-political soul-philosophy into the most business-like and realistic bargain emerging out of the "conjuncture of circumstances".

The most successful diplomat of the war-period from among the champions of the subject nationalities, Masaryk has known how to carry his head high in the interest of freedom and democracy down to 1935. India's interest in the psychology and social philosophy of Masaryk will grow from more to more, and his country will attract serious visitors from India in large numbers.

In India's cultivation of *Vishva-shakti* a distinct place has to be accorded to her relations with the countries of Asia. We have already touched upon the achievements of Japan since 1905 as formative forces in modern Indian life and thought. The developments in Persia since 1906, in Egypt,—which although lying in Africa is treated by Indians as an Asian territory,—since 1908, in Turkey since 1908, in China since 1911-12, and in Afganistan since 1919 are regarded in Indian public life and journalism almost as items of India's fortunes.

The Persian Medjlis, Enver Pasha, the Young Turk, Sun Yatsen, Zaghlul Pasha, Amanulla, Kemal Pasha, Riza Shah, and Chiang Kaishek are almost household words among Indian intellectuals. The work of the Pan-Asian Congress which held its first session at Nagasaki (Japan) in 1926 as well as that of the Pan-Oriental League which met for the first time in Odessa (Russia)

during the same year have their bearings on the growth of views in India.

The relations are not all political, however. The paintings of Persia and China have had some solid influence on the work of modern Indian artists. In 1934 the International Buddhist Congress was held at Tokyo and the Asiatic Labour Congress at Colombo. India was well represented in both these functions. The same year the Firdausi millenary was celebrated in different centres of India. The growth of an Asian consciousness among the Indians as a part of their world-sense or internationalism is one of the outstanding features of Indian culture during the last three decades or so.

A great value is to be attached to the influences of the different countries of Asia on the antiquarian researches of Indian scholars with special reference to "Greater India". The movement in this direction commenced under the guidance of Satis Chandra Mukerjee of the Dawn Society (Calcutta) during 1906—10 and took the first concrete shape in Radha Kumud Mookerji's *History of Indian Shipping* (1911), sections of which were published in the *Dawn Society's Magazine*. Modern India's *liaison* with Asia of the past as well as of the present is thus being built up on extensive and deep foundations.

It is not necessary to refer to the Indian Universities in connection with internationalism as they have been by all means among the pioneers in the establishment of India's contacts with the British and other forces in arts and sciences. But the attention of scholars deserves to be drawn to the fact that the Universities in India, although run on British lines, are not exclusively British in ideology and spiritual outfit. The Universities of India have grown to be no less centres

of universal culture than are the Universities of Great Britain and Ireland, nay, of entire Eur-America and Japan.

A special reference must, however, be made to the Readerships and Tagore Law Lectureships of the Calcutta University. For nearly half a century it is through these media that Young India has been brought into direct academic and social fellowship with a large number of foreign scholars. To mention some of the more recent imports, the American international jurist Garner, the French indologists Lévi and Foucher, the British Islamologist Margoliouth, historian Arthur Newton, and townplanning expert Harris, the German indologists Lueders and von Glasenapp, the French jurist Solus, the Czechoslovak indologists Lesny and Winternitz, the Hungarian Turcologist Germanus, the German mathematician Blaschke and physicist Sommerfeld, the Italian indologists Formichi and Tucci, the Turkish feminist Mme Halide Bey, and the Japanese poet Yone Noguchi may be singled out as having been invited to co-operate with the Indian world of culture.

Internationalism has been promoted by private initiative also. In 1904 the Indian Association for the Scientific and Industrial Education of Indians in Foreign Countries was established by Jogen Ghosh and has been functioning still. The National Council of Education, Bengal, established in 1906, has made it a point to specialize in mechanical, electrical and chemical engineering through its scholars educated abroad. The industrialization of Bengal and to a certain extent of India has been rendered possible because, among other agencies, of the young men such as have been associated with these institutions.

The Bose Institute, established by Jagadis Chunder Bose in 1916, is a

scientific laboratory. Under the auspices of this institution Hans Molisch, the botanist of Vienna, was invited to Calcutta for a semester.

Rabindranath Tagore's Vishva-Bharati (established 1922) at Santi-Niketan (Bolpur) has likewise been instrumental in importing scholars, especially indologists, from France (Lévi), Norway (Konow), Czechoslovakia (Winternitz) and Italy (Formichi) and rendering them available for Indian archaeologists and culture-historians. Persian and Chinese scholars as well as Japanese artists have also been introduced to India through the same channel.

In regard to the promotion of internationalism in culture a special place belongs to the Mahābodhi Society of Calcutta. It was established by Anagarika Dhammapala (1866—1933) of Ceylon in 1891. As true Buddhist, Dhammapala felt that Buddhism is neither exclusively Ceylonese nor exclusively Indian. For, in truth it is Tibetan, Burmese, Siamese, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese as well at the same time.

Hence as an embodiment of the traditional *appamada* or energism of the Buddhists he sought to establish the intercourse of modern India with China, Japan, and other countries of Asia. He is one of the pioneers of the Young Asia movement. The work started by him through the *Mahābodhi* journal (established in 1892) and otherwise has contributed to the cementing of bonds between the diverse regions of the Buddhist world, and the beginnings of an International Buddhist University have already been laid at Saranath near Benares (1935).

The Research Fellows of the *Bangiya Dhana-Vijnān Parishat* (Bengali Institute of Economics), established in 1928, have been carrying on investigations in economics, theoretical and applied, in

the perspective of "world-economy" and publishing the results of their studies in Bengali in the *Ārthik Unnati* (Economic Progress) monthly, which has been going on since 1926. Likewise in Bengali are being published the studies of the Research Fellows associated with the "*Āntarjatik Bunga*" *Parishat* ("International Bengal" Institute), established in 1932, which is interested in researches in sociology, constitution, current history, law and pedagogics on the basis of international statistics and developments. Then there is the *Bangiya German-Vidyā Samsad* (Bengali Society of German Culture), established in 1933, which enables Indian scholars to communicate to the world of arts and sciences the results of their studies based on original German documents.

The work of the Indian dailies, weeklies, and monthlies in the development of India's contacts with the world-forces is substantial enough to entitle their being described as "unrecognized Universities." It remains only to add that the Indian students in foreign countries, as well as merchants, travelers, workingmen, cultivators, preachers and others settled or sojourning abroad, —the Indians overseas—have accomplished a great deal in destroying India's spiritual isolation and introducing the world-atmosphere into India's home affairs.

The impact on Mother India of the work of Indians residing temporarily or permanently in the two hemispheres, —as "emigrants", "indentured labourers", businessmen, culture-pioneers or otherwise, is of tremendous importance and demands an independent thesis. No history of modern India can be complete which is indifferent to or overlooks the achievements of this "Greater India" in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

## CREDO

BY PROF. E. E. SPEIGHT

O well I know it well may be  
That faith, religion, poetry  
Are only dreams. And yet I know,  
With deeper truth than here below  
May ever be, that doubt, despair,  
And the soul's darkness everywhere,  
Are only clouds. The sun of love,  
The heart of God, abides above,

And to the endless radiance  
Of his redemption, draweth hence  
All souls when sorrow binds, each heart  
That yearneth to a nobler part,  
And every higher loyalty  
Of human trust. O well I know  
Our life is but the far-off glow  
Of His; a flickering far-off ray  
Deep-centred in the Eternal Day.

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## THE ATHARVA VEDA

BY DR. SURENDRA KISOR CHAKRABORTTY, M.A., Ph.D.

The *Vedas* are not a single literary work like the *Koran* or a collection of a number of books like the *Bible* or the Buddhist *Tripitaka*. It has been characterized "as a whole great literature which arose in the course of many centuries and through centuries have been handed down from generation to generation by verbal transmission, till finally it was declared by a younger generation—but even then at some pre-historic period—to be 'sacred knowledge,' divine revelation as much on account of its great age, as on account of its contents." We find that the belief in the sacredness of this vast literature arose "spontaneously" and it came to be dubbed as the *Sruti*, the heard, i.e., revealed, literature in order to distinguish it from the later literature called the *Smriti*, remembered, i.e. traditional, which naturally occupied a lower status in the estimation of the Aryans.

The oldest portion of the Vedic Literature, for example, the *Samhitâ*

portion is many centuries distant from the *Upanishads*, the *Vedânta*, the end or the last part of the *Vedas* according to one interpretation. The views of scholars differ so widely that it is well-nigh impossible to come to any definite conclusion. Some look upon 1000 B.C. as the earliest limit of the Vedic hymns, while others think them to have originated between 3000 and 2500 B.C. Max Müller arrived rather arbitrarily to the conclusion that "the beginning of the Vedic poetry" should be dated between 1200—1000 B.C., though he tried to make it clear that "in 1000 B.C. at the latest, our *Rigveda Samhitâ* must already have been completed." A discussion of the astronomical data in the *Vedas* led H. Jacobi of Bonn and Bal Gangadhar Tilak of Bombay to come to startling conclusions. Tilak dated some of the Vedic Texts to 6000 B.C. and Jacobi to about 4500 B.C. But the interpretation of the passages which are supposed to supply the astronomical data is not acceptable to all the scholars

and a definite conclusion is not warranted. Nor can we accept "the fantastic figures of 16000 or even 25000 B.C. as the date of the *Vedas* built up on the basis of astronomical or geological speculations." Winternitz, the German savant, has relied "on the evidence arising out of history of Indian literature itself, for the age of the *Veda*." It is reasonable to conclude that the Vedic Literature originated about 2000 or 2500 B.C., and ended between 750 and 500 B.C. as Pârsva, Mahâvira and Buddha pre-suppose the whole literature.

The *Samhitâs* form the oldest portion of the Vedic Literature. These are in poetry and are composed of hymns, prayers, incantations, sacrificial formulas etc. The *Brâhmanas* contain observations on the sacrifices, the rites and ceremonies connected with them and are in prose. The *Âranyakas* (or Forest Texts) are a portion of the *Brâhmanas*, specially meant for the recluses who lived in the forests; and the *Upanishads* are the latest portion and contain the philosophical speculations of the Rishis. Of the four *Samhitâs*—the *Rig Veda*, the *Sâma Veda*, the *Yajur Veda* and the *Atharva Veda*—the *Rig Veda* is the oldest and the *Atharva Veda* the latest.

The *Atharva Veda Samhitâ* is the collection of magic formulas, the *atharvan*; it had always a lower status and was looked down upon by the *Brâhmanas*. The Trayi Vidyâ "the three-fold knowledge" included the first three *Vedas* and excluded the *Atharva Veda*. The Vedic Aryans naturally despised the magic formulas and the *Atharva Veda* spirit is entirely different from that of the other *Vedas*, and the sacredness of this fourth *Veda* is frequently disputed. The reason is evident. The *Atharva* reflects the belief and practices of an older time and even in the Vedic Period it prevailed only

among the lower classes who were fond of magic formulas and incantations. The word 'Atharvan' originally meant a fire-priest and this was its significance in the Indo-Iranian period. Later on, it meant the incantations of the Atharvan or the spells and magic-formulas of the wizard-priests who flourished among the animistic peoples like the Shamans of Northern Asia and the Medicine Men of the American Indians of modern times. The oldest name of the *Atharva Veda* is *Atharvângirasah*, i.e. "The Atharvans and Angiras." The Angiras were also a class of fire-priests; and the two expressions Atharvan and Angiras stood for two different kinds of magic. Atharvan is "holy magic bringing happiness," and Angiras, "hostile magic or black magic", and includes curses against enemies, rivals etc.

The *Atharva* has 731 hymns with about 6000 verses, divided into 20 books. The one-seventh of this *Veda* is taken from the *Rig Veda*, and the language and metre of the hymns are essentially of the same character. It is an undoubted fact that the text of the *Atharva Veda* which has come down to us is later than the *Rig Veda*, though some of the hymns may be as old. There is, however, an essential difference in the religious ideas of these two *Vedas*. The practices enjoined by earlier phase in religious evolution. Magic or Witchcraft, an important essential of animism, represents a more primitive stage of belief and is essentially different from religion. It does not try to gain the "goodwill of divine beneficent powers by acts of worship," but is "largely directed against demoniac and hostile agencies and aims at affecting the course of things directly, without the intervention of deities." The beliefs of the primitive people are found in the *Atharva Veda* though the

book itself is later than the *Rig Veda* as a whole. Naturally the learned Brâhmanas had very little regard for the popular beliefs which had come down from pre-historic times and was perhaps much prevalent among the lower and uncultured classes who relied more on black magic than the songs of praise to the gods. The *Atharva* also includes philosophical disquisitions of a high order but these are evidently of a later period. As put by Dr. Winternitz, the great Sanskrit scholar, in the *Atharva Veda* "we move in a quite different world, from that of the *Rig Veda*. On the one hand the great gods of the sky, who embody the mighty phenomena of Nature, whom the singer glorifies and praises, to whom he sacrifices and to whom he prays, strong, helpful, some of them lofty beings, most of them friendly Gods of life—on the other hand the dark, demoniacal powers, which bring disease and misfortune upon mankind, ghostly beings, against whom the wizard hurls his wild curses or whom he tries to soothe and banish by flattering speeches."

The diseases were sometimes looked upon as personal beings or demons, and the spells for their healing were either addressed to them, or to the devils or evil spirits that were deemed to be the creators of diseases. The Fever is the "King of diseases" and many charms are addressed to it. Hymn No. 22, Chap. V.—a few verses may be quoted as typical—(Griffith's translation):—

"And thou thyself who makest all men  
yellow, consuming them with burn-  
ing heat like Agni,

Thou Fever! then be weak and in-  
effective,

Pass hence into the realms below or  
vanish . . . . . (2)

Endowed with universal power! send  
fever downward, far away,

The spotty, like red-coloured dust,

sprung from a spotty ancestor  
. . . . . (3)

Go fever, with consumption, thy brother  
and with thy sister cough,

And with thy nephew Herpes, go away  
unto that alien folk . . . . .  
(12)"

Many incantations were directed against the Pisâchas and Râksasas, the demons who were looked upon as the originators of diseases. Hymn 36, Chap. IV, *Atharva Veda* :—

"I am a pest to the Pisâcas, as the  
tiger to the owners of oxen, Like  
dogs, when they have perceived  
the lion, they find no loophole  
. . . . . (6)

I cannot bear with the Pisâcas, nor  
with thieves and the prowlers in  
the forests. From the village  
which I enter, the Pisâcas vanish  
. . . . . (7)

From the village which my violent  
strength encounters the Pisâcas  
vanish, they have no more evil  
intentions."

There is another class of Atharvan hymns that are concerned with the prayers for health and long life and are known as the âyusyâni sûktani, i.e. hymns for achieving long life. Connected with them are the benedictions (paustikâni), "by means of which the farmer, the shepherd, the merchant hope to gain happiness and success in their undertakings." The Rain-song in Chap. IV., Hymn 15 is the finest specimen. It is addressed to Parjanya :—

"Roar thunder, set the sea in agitation,  
bedew the ground with thy sweet  
rain, Parjanya!

Send plenteous showers on him who  
seeketh shelter and let the owner  
of lean kine go homeward." . . .  
etc.

Topics like the following are also found in the *Atharva Veda*—(a) expira-  
tory formulas and spells for cleansing,

from guilt and sin; (b) spells for the restoration of harmony in the family and (c) magic songs referring to marriage and love—e.g. the Basikarana Mantra (Ath. VI, 180):—

“Madden him, Maruts, Madden him,  
Madden him, Madden him, O air,  
Madden him, Agni, Madden him  
Let him consume with love of me

—(180, 4).

If thou shouldst run three leagues  
away, five leagues, a horse's daily  
stage,

Thence thou shalt come to me again  
and be the father of my sons.”

The curses and exorcisms against demons, wizards and others also belong to the Angiras class. It is thus evident that the *Atharva Veda* religion is not only earlier to that of the other *Vedas* but was according to modern standard of a lower type. It reveals a very early phase of religion when “men,” according to Sir J. G. Fraser, “first tries to control nature by magical means and finding this impossible resorts to entreaty, which is the hall mark of religion as distinguished from magic.”

Whether we accept this statement or not, there is no doubt that this old religion of fear was based upon magic rites, spells and incantations. But in the latest portion of the *Atharva Veda* we have sublime passages, notably the Hymn to Varuna. From the translation of Muir:—

“The mighty lord on high our deeds,  
as if at hand, espies;

The Gods know all men do, though  
man would fain their acts disguise,

Who ever stands, who ever moves, or  
steals from place to place,

Or hides him in his secret cell—the  
Gods his movements trace.

Where ever two together plot, and  
deem they are alone,

King Varuna is there, a third and all  
their schemes are known.

This earth is his, to him belong those  
vast and boundless skies;

Both seas within him rest, yet in that  
small pool he lies.”—and so on.

In the *Rig Veda*, we enter a new world altogether. The *Rig Vedic* Hymns were surely used in connection with certain religious sacrifices and ceremonies but there is no doubt that these are the outpouring of the hearts of the inspired Rishis of old who praised their Gods and invoked them for rewards in the shape of kine, children, wealth etc. in return for the oblations of ghee (clarified butter) in the sacrificial fire, and the offering of an intoxicating drink which was manufactured through an elaborate process; and of this the Vedic Aryans were so fond that the tenth Mandala of the *Rig Veda* is devoted only to Soma worship.

The *Rig Vedic* Gods are anthropomorphic in their physical attributes. Their abode is the heaven—the third heaven where they live a life of bliss, ever cheered by the draughts of Soma, and their favourite food consisted of milk, butter, grain, and the flesh of sheep, goat etc. just like men. Their most important characteristic is power, they regulate the order of nature, rule over all creatures and vanquish the powers of evil. They are generally benevolent beings with the exception of Rudra and confer prosperity on mankind. Max Müller was so much impressed by the practice of the Vedic Rishis in invoking the individual gods as the highest for the time being that he characterized this phase of religion as “henotheism” or kathenotheism of the *Veda* which he defines as “the belief in individual Gods alternately regarded as the highest.” Modern scholars are not prepared to go so far; they look upon this practice as an exaggerated

form of praise and not as a distinct phase of religious type.

The religion of fear in the *Atharva Veda* is followed by a new phase in the *Rig Veda* when the main object is to obtain earthly and religious happiness by offering prayers and oblations and performing the Yajñas. This is

followed by the lifeless ritualistic religion in the *Brāhmanas*, and the opposition to this religious phase becomes manifest in the *Upanishads*, where we have according to Schopenhauer "the fruit of the highest human knowledge and wisdom", and we meet within them "almost superhuman conceptions".

## PRAYER

BY SWAMI NIKHILANANDA

It is very difficult to speak on the necessity of prayer. As a great devotee said, there is no argument for prayer, it is just like faith in the existence of God. No one can convince us by argument that we should pray or tell us how our prayers are answered just as it cannot be proved or demonstrated by argument why we like the Fifth Symphony of Beethoven or a Bach Fugue. Just as something within us is stirred up when we hear the music and we are convinced of its sweetness, so when the soul of the devotee is stirred up with the call of the Divine he feels the presence of God and he feels the necessity of prayer. Prayer is, and will always remain, the deepest impulse of the soul of man. Without prayer we would all go mad. Prayer is for the soul what food is for the body. But the body can live without food for a time, the body can be sustained or even improved without food now and then. Not the soul; the soul cannot be sustained, the soul cannot find peace without constant prayer. Prayer begins with faith in God and it is always associated with humility. When we pray to God we should fill our hearts with the sense of humility. We are worse than atoms, even atoms observe or follow some

physical law, but many a time we do not observe any law.

Again we know that the great teachers of the world, from the earliest times, received their illumination through prayer. Whenever Jesus Christ would be in distress, whenever he would be in confusion, he would retire into solitude and pray to his Father in heaven. There are many years in the life of Jesus Christ of which we know nothing. During those years of his retirement into the wilderness he realized the Highest Truth. It seems to me that that period of his life was spent entirely in prayer, in silent communion with God. Take the life of Mohammed. Every day he would retire into the mountains and there he would unite himself with God in prayer, and God revealed the Truth to him when his mind was at one with God. Even coming to modern times, those of us who have read the Life of Sri Ramakrishna are well aware of the fact that he too realized the Highest Truth, received the Highest Illumination in life only through prayer. Standing before the image of God he would say, "O Divine Mother, I do not know Yoga, I do not know philosophy, I have not the intellect of the learned man; I am just like a child. Reveal Thyself unto me!"



Day after day and night after night he would pray to the Divine Mother. Sometimes in the evening he would go to the bank of the Ganges and roll on the ground, saying, "Another day of this worthless life has gone by, and I have not realized Truth." He would cry just like a child, or like a man suffering from pain. People would stand around him and think that the boy had actually lost his mother. One day his agony of separation from God was so intense that he could no longer stand it, and standing before the image of the Divine Mother he prayed : "O Mother, art Thou only imagination, is it really a freak of mind that people pray unto Thee. Thou revealed Thyself in olden times to many saints and seers. Their lives have been sweetened by Thy Divine Presence. Am I a wretch that Thou dost not reveal Thyself unto me?" And with these words he took a sword that was hanging from the roof and was about to plunge it into his heart, thinking that life was worthless without the vision of God, when the Divine Mother revealed Herself before him in all Her glory and in all Her majesty. So all the great souls of the world received their illumination only through prayer.

There may be disputes about dogmas and creeds. There may be disputes about philosophy. There may be different systems of thought. But there can be no difference of opinion whatsoever about prayer. Saint Augustine, who wrote the learned treatise on the Doctrine of the Trinity, when he prayed, did not feel the presence of three Gods. His heart was filled with the presence of One. Therefore prayer is always the deepest impulse in the human soul. We cannot ignore it. At one time in Africa a native woman, when she first heard a Christian sermon, said to her neighbour in church : "There ! I always told

you there ought to be a God like that." When the deepest core in our heart is touched by prayer, all barriers drop off. There is no more confusion, there is no more misgiving. This sudden impulse for prayer we all feel in times of crisis ; at the time of war, of difficulty, or when we have to shoulder certain responsibilities. Then our knees bow down in prayer. Take the case of the last war. People prayed in churches for the destruction of their enemies. I am not at all concerned with that selfish side of the prayer, but what interests me most is that those who never went to church for prayer during their whole lifetime, went at that time. Mothers, fathers, friends, they all went to church to pray to God. A Scotchman said during the war that in his country their church always gave a sermon, but at the time of war the church gave them an opportunity to pray. At such a time of crisis we are filled with that sense of God. When Queen Victoria was nineteen years old, she was awakened at midnight by the Prime Minister who came and announced to her that she was the Queen of England and Empress of India. Her first impulse was to pray, and she asked the Prime Minister to wait while she went into her room and knelt down before God. Even King Solomon, whose life was not immaculate, when he took the responsibility of the throne, prayed from his heart for strength and courage, compassion and faith, so that he might guide the destiny of his people.

Prayer is a natural function of our mind. It is not an artificial addition. It is not like growing tropical plants in Greenland. It is universal because it is natural. Many a time people try to crush out the sense of prayer. They think only the superstitious pray to God. But in spite of all these efforts prayer will always remain. Take the

case of Buddhism. Buddha denied God, and he denied the efficacy of prayer; but today millions of Buddhists all over the world have made Buddha their God and spend their time, day and night, in prayer to him. Take the case of Confucius. He was silent about the existence of God. In his religion there is no room for prayer. His religion is based upon ethics and morality, but still thousands of his followers in China have made Confucius their God and pray to him. In the religion of Islam every man is exhorted to pray five times daily. In Sufism there are three stages of prayer. In the first stage we only utter words through our lips. In the second stage we fix our mind on divine things, and during the third stage it is with great difficulty that we take our mind away from divine things.

Mankind never outgrows prayer. Even primitive peoples pray to God, though in a different way. In ancient times among primitive peoples prayer was offered in form of magic. They thought that with incantations and magic they could compel God to fulfil their desires. But even if we come down to modern times the spirit of prayer is always present. It may have changed its form, that is all. When Jesus Christ prayed to his Father in heaven, he said different things than did the primitive peoples when they prayed. But the prayer is always there. When Raphael would paint his Madonnas, he would always be on his knees. Even the scientists of modern times often feel this necessity of being on their knees. Prayer arouses within us our subtle powers. It is by this that our latent spirituality is awakened. Prayer may be offered in different forms according to our different stages of spiritual evolution. When Samson died, he prayed, "May I be avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes." They

had blinded him, and he prayed for revenge. But when St. Stephen prayed, he said: "Lay not this sin on their heads." Therefore prayer is not only universal in extent, but infinite in quality. It takes its form according to the necessity of the human mind. In its lowest form prayer is uttered in a very crude manner, perhaps often mixed with bitterness.

If we cherish ill feeling toward friends, we pray bitterly for their destruction. But that is prayer at its lowest. At its highest, prayer is spiritual. It is grand and magnanimous; and it is latent in the life of everyone.

When we speak of disbelief, such disbelief is only a matter of opinion. It is not a matter of impulse. Our impulse always tells us to believe in God. Even an agnostic or atheist finds his life absolutely dull because he does not have anything to believe in. There is a famous statement by an atheist, who said at the time of his death: "O God, if there be any God, receive my soul, if there be any soul!" There is no escape from it, we must all pray. Modern science has told us that the whole world is like an automaton. The world is guided by fixed laws, and God Himself is a prisoner of the laws He has made. God's laws are fulfilled in this world and we cannot change these laws. Therefore it is useless to pray. Things happen in this world in an unalterable fashion. We cannot check them, as we cannot check the sunrise or the sunset. But in spite of all this loud condemnation from the scientist or ultra-modern man against prayer, it is still going on. All the churches are filled with the prayers of earnest devotees. It is just like the water in an artesian well. It comes up and nobody can check it. As someone has said: "I pray on this principle, that the wine inside the bottle pushes up the cork;

there is some sort of fermentation within me and it must find some vent."

That is the meaning of prayer.

Prayer should not be spasmodic, or occasional, or untrained. Many people say that the whole of life is a prayer, therefore why should one go to a church or temple, or have a special time for his prayer, because every act is prayer. That is true; but like all human virtues, this prayer, if it is done in an untrained way, does not give the proper result. Take the case of love. Love is the noblest human virtue, but if this love be untrained or undisciplined, if it be spasmodic, it turns into carnal craving, it becomes fleshy, it becomes beastly, it partakes of animal qualities. Take the case of thought. Thinking is the noblest virtue and distinguishes us from the animals, but if thought is not trained, if we are not disciplined in the art of thinking, then our thought runs wild. This is true of prayer also. If we do not make it a constant endeavour in our life, prayer does not yield us the real result. God should be our constant companion. We solicit God when we have a toothache or other bodily pain, or when our pocket-book is empty. That kind of respect for God does not give us the result we demand from our spiritual life. God is our inward and abiding friend, a purifying presence whose moral purpose restrains us, whose love upholds us. Suppose there is a man who has two sons. One son loves his father in fits and starts. He does not always take him into his confidence. He leads a whimsical life and only when in danger runs to his father. That boy is sent to college and there also he does not keep in touch with his father; he only writes when he wants more money or when he becomes involved in a disgraceful affair. But the other son constantly makes his father his confidant, he loves his father under all cir-

cumstances and takes good counsel from him. Which is the nobler form of sonship? The one who consults his father only at times of difficulty or when his pocket-book is short of money? That son does not feel the virtue of nobility. In the same way those who run to God for blessings only in times of danger or difficulty are not real devotees. At one time a man came to a saint with his head wrapped in a bandage. The saint asked the cause of the bandage, and the man told him he had an attack of headache. The saint asked whether the man had a headache every day, that he put a bandage around his head. "No," the man answered, "only once or two times a year my head aches." Then the saint said, "Today you have a headache, and though it happens only once or twice a year, you put on a bandage to proclaim to the world that God is cruel to you and has visited you with headache. Why do you not put some sign on your head the other three hundred and sixty-two days to proclaim to the world that God is blessing you without a headache?" So this kind of spasmodic prayer, only when you are in difficulty, is not real prayer. We use God just to run errands for us. We require or want this thing or that thing and therefore we come to God. That is not the real test of a devotee. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that the nature of those who are not real devotees is like that of a fly; the fly sometimes sits on sweetmeats and sometimes on cow-dung. But the nature of those who are real devotees is like that of the bee; the bee never deserts the flowers. It always sips the honey from them. The real devotee is like the Châtaka bird, who will die of thirst sitting on the bank of a river before he takes a drop of that river water. He will look to the sky for a drop of rain, because he only likes rain water. In the same

way, a real devotee will look up to God for his inward satisfaction, for his peace and happiness; and he will spurn, he will set aside with contempt, everything the world holds before him. Nothing in the world can satisfy him, neither money, nor worldly relationships, nor name and fame. Nothing that is valued in the world will be pleasing to him. His heart will constantly look to his Father in heaven for sustaining peace and happiness.

Prayer has various meanings. Its significance depends on our spiritual evolution. At a certain stage we pray to God, whom we think to be outside the world, who has created this world, and who can change the order of the world. So we pray in time of famine, asking God to give us food. In times of drought we pray to Him to send us rain, or in times of war to give us peace. When we are ill, we ask God to give us health, to cure our disease. When a beloved one is about to die, we pray to God to spare the life of the dying man. It is just a case of begging, because our thought about God has not been refined. We still have a very crude idea of God. Whether these prayers are answered, I do not know. Many people say they are. People have headaches, and they go to Christian Scientists and believe that the headache is removed. It may be so. I do not know. But prayer always presupposes a higher Power, in whatever form it may be offered. Whether you are a devotee of a crude nature, or highly developed, or as devoted as Jesus Christ, it does not matter; all of us believe (that is, those who believe in prayer), that there is a higher Power. It seems to me that the best definition of prayer is resignation to that higher Power and utter abandonment to His will. Science calls this higher Power the mechanical and material laws of the

universe. The sun, the moon, the stars, the planets, the trees, the animals, the atoms and molecules, the different forces of nature, all obey those laws. But science says that law is blind, that law is purposeless, that law cannot be resisted, that we are nothing but mere cogs in the machine and are being crushed under the weight of that law. But still science admits there is law. From the standpoint of science also there is no other escape than a sort of abandonment, a sort of resignation to the working of this great law of the universe. Religion also believes in the same law. Religion also says that at the back of the universe there is higher Power, there is law; but religion says that that law is not without purpose, that law is not unintelligent, that law is not unconscious. On the other hand it has a definite motive, a definite goal in view. If there be a higher law, how should we attune ourselves to it? How should we establish our relationship with that law? As science says that the human being is absolutely helpless before the material law or physical law of the universe, the religious man also says that we are absolutely helpless before that law which he calls God. Therefore the prayer of a real devotee is, "Thy will be done," because His will is always done. Not a sparrow falls without his notice. Not even an ant moves without His hearing it. If that be the case, if His will is done whether we like it or not, the only way to escape from the agony of living, from the disappointments of life, is to understand the working of that law and to completely resign ourselves to that will of God. If the sword is going to fall on my neck, my head is going to be chopped off whether I like it or not so the best thing is to kneel down and submit. If I try to ward off the blow with my hand, I lose my hand as well as the

head! Therefore the best prayer is, "Thy will be done, as it is in heaven so on earth, for Thine is the Power and the Glory and the Kingdom forever. That is the last word of all religions. All religions say, "Not I, but Thou, O God." When this egoism completely vanishes, when we kill all desire for our personal aggrandizement, then real prayer begins.

Never come to God as a beggar. Never be a shopkeeper. Never say, "O God, give me this or that, and then I shall know Thou art merciful." Shop-keeping is not religion. The lover never speaks in that language. Christ drove all the money-lenders from the temple because the temple is not the place for shopkeepers. He said, "You have turned this temple, which is the body of God, into a place of thieves and robbers." Therefore, when we pray, let our prayer be, "Thy will be done," because that will is always done; and those who believe in God, those who believe in the love and compassion of God, know that when His will is done it is always for their good. We may not know it. We cannot see anything beyond the tip of our nose. But is it not foolish to pray to God, whom we believe to be omniscient and omnipresent, whom we believe to be all-knowing, petitioning Him for this or that? When we ask in this way, do we not limit His knowledge? Does God, being Almighty, not know what we need and what it is to our interest to have? Christ also says that the best prayer is to completely abandon oneself to the will of God. We suffer from the misery of life because we set our will against His will. The highest prayer is, "Let my will not go against Thy will. May Thy will and my will be one. What Thou decreest let that be my innermost desire." Let there be no conflict between the purpose of the Cosmic Soul

and the individual soul, for when there is no conflict there is peace of mind.

We often wonder how the great saints got their peace of mind. These great souls—never for a moment thought they had bitter cups to drink from. Everyone in the world must drink from the bitter cup, but the saints drink that cup of bitterness with pleasure and happiness because they have implicit faith in the will of God. Why should we ask for money? Is money everything in life? Money comes today and goes tomorrow. Just imagine a Christ, or Moses, or even a Mahatma Gandhi, with the money of a Carnegie or a Rockefeller. Would they still be Christ, or Moses, or Gandhi? Why do we ask for health? Health cannot be preserved for ever. This is the law. If you ask for human birth, if you pray for human birth, and you have prayed to God for human birth, you must obey all the laws associated with the human body. Why do you pray to God to have your headache removed? As long as you have a head, you must expect to have headaches. As long as you have teeth, you must expect to have toothaches. As long as you have a human body, you must expect disease. But if you pray to God to keep your mind away from the physical consciousness, from the body consciousness, then there will be no more pain or disease. Therefore, let us not be beggars. A beggar is never admitted into the presence of the King of kings. To pray to God for wealth or health is just like being satisfied with water from a ditch when you stand on the bank of the Ganges, or to be satisfied with a crystal when you visit a diamond mine. But always the traitor in us, that traitor 'I', raises itself. There is always the revolt of the 'I'. The path of faith is extremely difficult. It is as sharp as the blade of

a razor. But we must always make the effort. So long as prayer comes to our mind for this or that thing of worldly nature, for health or wealth or worldly happiness, at once through discrimination we should destroy this tendency of mind and say, "Thy will be done." You cannot worship, as Christ said, God and Mammon. As Jehovah said in the Old Testament, "I, thy God, am a jealous God." If there is that traitor in us, the idea of egoism, we cannot really be admitted into the presence of God. It is impossible to satisfy both God and ego, as was said by a great devotee in India : "Where there is desire there is no God, and where there is God there is no desire. Night and day cannot co-exist, so God and desire also cannot co-exist." Whenever that traitor 'I', the ego, raises its head, we must try to stifle it with discrimination. We should day and night pray to God in this way : "We do not want deliverance from pain or affliction; let misery and affliction come, let death come, let disappointments come, but O God, grant unto us this prayer, that our mind may not be dissociated from Thy Lotus feet. In whatever circumstances Thou mayest place us, may our mind be always filled with Thy love. If we be filled with the

love of God even in the midst of bitterest sorrow, even in the midst of bitterest disappointment, we shall always feel peace and happiness.

Sri Ramakrishna had been suffering from cancer of the throat, that terrible disease, and when the pain would be most excruciating he would sing : "Let the body be occupied with this disease, but may my mind always dwell in the love of God." And by singing this two or three times, he would go into ecstasy and completely forget the pain of his throat. Therefore, to escape from the misery of the world is not to pray to God to remove this or that difficulty, or to give us this or that thing, or to satisfy this or that demand, but to constantly pray to God to keep our mind in communion with Him in pleasure and pain, in success and failure, in life and death, always to keep our mind fixed on Him. Whenever that traitor in us rebels, whenever the 'I' diverts our attention to worldly things, we should say : "No ! Thy will be done." When that sentence, that prayer, has once gone out of our mouth, we cannot take it back. "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, for Thine is the Kingdom, the Power, the Glory for ever and ever."

## JANE ADDAMS

### A WORLD-FAMOUS SOCIAL WORKER

BY DR. SUDHINDRA BOSE, Ph.D.

#### I

The recent death of Jane Addams removes from this earth one of the most important figures in American life. A champion of human freedom, an advocate of international peace, a friend of the poor and the outcast,

an ambassador of good-will to the universe, Miss Addams was one of the rarest souls of this sad Vale of Tears. She would have been 75 years young next month.

She has been described as America's greatest woman so many times that

the description has almost become trite. A distinguished publicist has suggested that "no man has ever been more of a humanitarian." When Jane Addams won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931, her name gave a lustre to the award that it has not always possessed.

## II

President Theodore Roosevelt, years ago publicly labelled Miss Addams, the founder of the famous Chicago Social Settlement Hull House, as "Chicago's most useful citizen". Ex-premier Ramsay MacDonald of England called her "best-loved woman in the world", and the terms "foremost American woman" and "most illustrious citizen" have been echoed and re-echoed more times than one can count. Yet I cannot but recall that less than four months ago, a patriotic American organization accused her of "boring from within", "undermining America", and associating with "world revolutionaries". But Jane Addams lived such a good and helpful life that it made mock of libels.

During the Great War her pacifist sympathies brought her much condemnation from the patrioters. But she did not flinch. "There is heroism in being a pacifist", she said after the War. It is a curious fact that the one statement for which this hated pacifist was most severely attacked during the war time was an entirely truthful one—that the soldiers who were daily going to their useless deaths "over the top" were given strong drinks or opiates. The pro-Ally press fell upon her for it with rage and fury, calling it a reflection upon the noble manhood of the Allied troops, the lying British propaganda service naturally chimed in. Afterwards it was, of course, well substantiated.

Jane Addams was never a menace to true Americanism or to humanitarianism. There will always be people without souls to sneer and snarl at the truly great. Miss Addams has been dangerous only to those who wish to arrest the world's progress and evolution, for she has insisted upon being in the forefront of advance.

## III

Jane Addams was born in 1860 in a little village in the State of Illinois. Her father was a member of State (Provincial) Legislature of Illinois and was a close friend of Abraham Lincoln, the Great Emancipator. The light of the great name of Lincoln lay over much of Jane Addams' life. She graduated from Rockford College in 1881, and spent several years travelling and studying in Europe before deciding on her life-work. Having observed social conditions throughout America, she came to the City of Chicago to start a settlement house. At Halsted and Polk streets, in the midst of the teeming squalor and meanness, cruelty and evil of Chicago's West Side, she founded Hull House. She made it the civilizing centre of its own neighbourhood, and gradually of an ever-widening area of American life. To be sure there had been tentative experiments before, but this was the first social settlement in America.

First of all, Hull House was a home where everybody was welcome. Day and night the doors stood open, where the dispossessed and the bewildered, the friendless and the forgotten had gone for refuge. It became a haven of the poor and the down-trodden.

Secondly, Hull House became a kind of social service college, with students in residence and graduates scattered in large numbers throughout the land.

The names of those who lived at Hull House and then went forth to serve and lead in the nation's life include many of the greatest and noblest in the history of the last generation.

Thirdly, Hull House became a social laboratory: a creative centre of social and political reform. Clean streets were here conceived, labour laws discussed, debated and then fought for. It was a pioneer in juvenile crime research from which came the Juvenile Court. It fostered votes for women, when this cause was most unpopular. It stood for liquor prohibition and cherished the dream of international peace. In every worthwhile reform, through all these years, it was in the forefront of thought and action.

The residents in Hull House, it is to be noted, are not self-important career-seekers. None has ever received salary, except technical workers. Most of the residents earn their living elsewhere and spend their leisure time at Hull House. It is a labour of love.

Hull House has been a citadel of compassion. Yet it did not fail, in its early days, to evoke withering blasts of scorn from the holy church. Among the bitterest opponents of Hull House have been the men of the cloth. Clergymen considered themselves affronted to have as neighbour such an institution which was not only unconnected with any church, but was without sectarian flavour. Hull House and all its works were denounced as atheistic and immoral. The churches, however, passed; Hull House remained.

The late William T. Stead, editor of the *Review of Reviews*, wrote in his celebrated philippic against the evils of Chicago: "There is still one hope for the new social democracy, and when I reflect upon Jane Addams' mission and contemplate the true meaning of the work she built up, I am sure that

if Christ ever comes to Chicago he will stop at Hull House."

#### IV

No one will ever be able to put into words the whole record of the goodness of Jane Addams, though I have somewhat ineffectually tried to tell something of her social philosophy in one of my earlier books on America, entitled *Glimpses of America*. There I called her "An American Saint". But I know better now. She was more than a saint and a seer. She was cast in a sturdier mould. She was a great statesman. If it were not for masculine prejudice and vanity, she would have been the President of the United States.

In spite of her exacting work at Hull House, she found time for other interests. She was a pioneer fighting for women's suffrage with remarkable statesmanship. She founded the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and worked hard for the realization of its goal. After her visit from India, she wrote admiringly of Mahatma Gandhi and his programme of non-violence. In thought and deed, Miss Addams was a lover of peace and freedom—just as Gandhiji is.

Miss Jane Addams set an admirable example before men and women of all countries. She built her life on a sharing with others not only material goods, but of interests, affections, and aspirations. She had compassion without condescension. Of all her titles she liked best that of "Inspector of Streets and Alleways" in the neighbourhood of Hull House. She earned it by cleaning up the district, the slummiest of the slum district. I knew her personally and she always impressed me with her poise, dignity, gentleness, simplicity, peace of mind, and purity



of heart. Though born in an obscure village, she grew to be internationally known through the sheer power of the spiritual force which she reflected into the dark places of American life and thought. She brightened the lives of millions. She was one of the noblest women of all time.

"If you would see her monument, look around you," Dr. Charles W. Gilkey, Dean of the University of Chicago chapel, said at Miss Jane Addams' funeral in Hull House. Side by side sat her friends : statesmen and politicians, civic leaders and poor persons, white men and black Negroes.

## THE IDEAL OF A UNIVERSAL RELIGION

BY SWAMI RANGANATHANANDA

### RELIGION—A CURSE AS WELL AS A BLESSING IN THE PAST

It is an undeniable fact of history that one of the most potent factors in the evolution of humanity has been the force which manifests itself as Religion and the religious instinct. From earliest times it has supplied the motive for social cohesion and social progress. Besides satisfying the individual's spiritual needs, it has also been the power to unite individuals into groups and communities. But it is a strange paradox that this same impulse which has contributed to human unity and welfare has also been the cause of much strife and disunion among mankind. It seems as though religions are closed systems and the only relation they can have towards one another is that of antagonism. The powers for blessing which they exhibit in their narrow spheres of sect and community turn into curses when applied to the larger world outside. Every system has appealed to the religious susceptibilities of its votaries to goad them either to war, persecution, or murder. Thus some of the most atrocious crimes and inhuman practices in all history have been perpetrated in its name. These are some of the blackest pages of all

religious history. Whatever blessing it has conferred in private has thus been nullified in public.

### INDIAN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT--ITS UNIQUE FEATURE

The only country where religious wars and persecutions have been comparatively negligible is India. This, let us note, is not because there is no deep religious feeling in India, as some critics would think, to whom love for one's religion is achieved only by hating other religions; neither is it due to any absence of variety in the religious outlook. History shows, and even today it is a fact, that both in point of spiritual fervour and the variety of its expression, India stands foremost in the world. The science of Comparative Religion tells us that the evolution of religious ideas has been, to a great extent, identical throughout the world. But whereas outside India this evolution stopped at the tribal stage and the monotheistic conception, Indian spiritual genius soared higher and yet higher and discovered the Unity behind all the Gods. This is a great landmark in the history of religions in general, for it marks the stage at which religion turns out to be the messenger of all peace and all blessing to the whole of humanity

instead of being partially good and partially evil, as it has been in its earlier stages. For India herself, this discovery was momentous; for, through this she has been spared from endless travails of religious persecution. This idea carries with it a certain universal outlook, being based on a highly rational philosophy, which later Vedic thought, especially the *Upanishads*, developed into its logical conclusion by discovering the Unity behind all existence.

#### RELIGIOUS SECTARIANISM--ITS EVILS AND ITS REMEDY

The relationship between religion and religion has been anything but happy. Religions which seemed to have worked well in the places of their birth are found to be failures in their careers outside. Sentiments like love, brotherhood and peace give place to those of hatred, scorn, and strife. In the name of religion, countries have been devastated, great cultures have been destroyed, and masses of men have been massacred—all with the 'pious' idea of extending the empire of the 'One God'. Little does the fanatical religionist realize that that is not the way to establish the 'Kingdom of Heaven' on earth. There is no doubt that the destruction of cultures like those of Peru, Mexico, etc. really leaves such a 'Kingdom of Heaven' poorer in spiritual content. The sectarian spirit of religion is manifestly antagonistic to the very spirit of modern times which is scientific through and through, and which appeals not to sects and sections but to humanity at large. Consequently, the prestige of religion itself has suffered much in modern times. If religion is to be a living force in the modern world and contribute its share for the ushering in of a future civilization of humanity, it requires to be restated and cast into

rational and scientific moulds. The solidarity of mankind is the ideal for which science stands. The immense possibilities which the scientific advancement of the last three centuries holds in its bosom for the realization of the great hopes of poets and philosophers of the past ages, require for their consummation a new spirit, a new outlook and a new message, universal in its appeal, which will mediate between religion and religion on the one hand, and science and religion on the other. Where is this message, this quickening impulse, to come from? To this insistent question, the eager minds of thinking men, both in the East and the West, turn towards India and the invaluable treasures of her spiritual and philosophic thought.

#### VEDANTA--ITS CONTRIBUTION TO INDIAN THOUGHT AND LIFE

This is no audacious claim. We have seen already how Indian thought took a great step towards religious harmony when it discovered the One God of whom all other gods are but manifestations. This is the great idea embodied in that famous verse of the *Rig Veda*, "Ekam Sat Viprah Bahudhâ Vadanti" (Truth is One; sages call It by various names, such as Indra, Mitra, Varuna etc.). Not only this; no new thought has ever suffered suppression in India—be it in science, religion, or philosophy. Where all knowledge is held as sacred, how is it possible to suppress any aspect of it? The *Upanishads* speak of the Parâ and Aparâ kinds of knowledge. All sciences including even the holy *Vedas* are only Aparâ knowledge, while Philosophy *par excellence* is the only Parâ knowledge. Let us note, in this connection, that Aparâ does not and cannot mean here anything inferior in kind. That knowledge which is derived from human experience in parts and aspects is

Aparâ, while that which is the fruit of a study of *experience as a whole*, of *life in its totality*, is Parâ. And all knowledge of the Aparâ kind is only an expression of the Parâ Vidyâ, Philosophy. This is the same as Brahma-vidyâ, Brahman standing for the totality of existence and experience. This is the famous Vedânta philosophy, which is the very kernel and core of Indian culture, the fairest flower of its thought—the one which has given Indian culture its distinctive character and uniqueness. It is the spirit of Vedânta which has moulded all forms of Indian life and which has mediated between sect and sect, imparting to the rich variety of Indian thought its synthetic unity. This is the mesmerism of Indian thought which is slowly gripping the minds of many a serious thinker of the West. Those who speak of Hinduism as a bewildering mass of confused religious and social ideas and practices have not yet grasped Vedânta. To understand India and Hinduism requires first of all, an intimate acquaintance with the spirit of Vedânta. It is in virtue of this Vedânta that we are enabled to speak of the 'fundamental unity of India'. It will be in virtue of this same Vedânta that we will be enabled not merely to speak about, but achieve, the fundamental unity of humanity itself. And if religious harmony, social progress, and national solidarity are lacking in present-day India, the quickening impulse must come from this Vedânta alone, for it is the store-house of all wisdom.

#### INDIAN THOUGHT AND SRI RAMAKRISHNA

The Oneness of all existence is the message which Vedânta teaches. The immediate implication of this message in life and thought is another great idea which seems to run counter to the very spirit of religious sectarianism but which

breathes truly the scientific spirit. As Swami Vivekananda expresses it, "Man travels not from error to truth, but from truth to truth—from truth that is lower to truth that is higher." If truth is like a pyramid, the *Philosophical* understanding of Unity is its apex. Viewed from this supreme height, no aspect of life or effort can appear as false or erroneous; for truth itself is the goal of *all* paths. It is chiefly in the application of this great idea to the pressing problems of modern life that the life and message of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda are supremely significant. Through them we find Indian thought, especially the Vedânta, speaking to the modern world for composing its distractions and ushering in on earth an era of what the Upanishads call 'Satyâtma Prânârâman Mana Anandam Sânti Samridham Amritam' (Truth, the solace of life and bliss of the mind, exuberant with the wealth of peace and immortality).

#### UNIVERSALISM, OLD AND NEW

The idea of a universal religion is not something new in the world. There have been two senses in which it has been understood. When a religion steps out of its local boundaries and starts on a career of conquest and annexation, adding new recruits, much in the same way as an empire extends by the accession of new territories, it styles itself as a universal religion. Such a religion keeps before itself the alluring ideal of becoming a world-religion sooner or later and believes itself to be the only fit candidate to that estate. The outstanding examples of this type are Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism. The last one differs from the other two both in its methods and motives of such extension. Unlike Christianity and Islam, the spread of Buddhism has been singularly character-

ized by a spirit of peace and non-violence. This is undoubtedly due to the influence of Indian thought wherein Buddhism has its roots and from which it has sprung. Christianity and Islam on the other hand, have followed a relentless course of destruction and persecution with the ostensible purpose of 'saving' the 'damned souls'. Now this idea of universal religion is self-destructive. Not through conquest and the use of might is the way to universal religion. It breathes the spirit of the Old Testament, where, when a tribe conquers another tribe, it also destroys the latter's God and imposes its own God over it. It is this same spirit which is working now when in the place of tribes, we have alien cultures and religions. And when there are two claimants, both equally strong, zealous and fanatical, this idea of universalism is seen to defeat itself. The fact is, there is a world of difference between the two assertions—"My God is the *only true* God and you *must* accept Him," and "My God and your God are *one and the same*, differing at best only in name." When a single religious belief, sincerely held, is disturbed and destroyed, the purpose of universal religion defeats itself.

The second idea of Universal religion is seen expressed in the eclecticism of Akbar and some modern sects and movements. Eclecticism is like a bouquet of choice flowers, and like a bouquet it has no enlivening principle in it and is bound to wither away. A still greater criticism is that it has a tendency to become a closed system in itself, which defeats its very purpose. It says, 'There is so much sectarianism in the world; it must be destroyed; so let us start a new sect'. This sounds like the famous war-time sentiment—a war to end all wars. But just as not one among the older sects is entitled to legitimately claim

universality, by the same inexorable logic, no new sect also can lay claim to that position.

#### SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S IDEAL OF UNIVERSAL RELIGION

From the previous analysis we have come to this—that no religion can aspire *individually* to become universal. Unity in variety is the test of universality and not a dull and dead uniformity. In sharp contrast to the previous two conceptions stands Sri Ramakrishna's ideal of a Universal Religion. The very first principle of this ideal is, "If one religion is true, then by the very same logic all other religions are also true," the verification of which is found in the fact that "holiness, purity, and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character." Hence this great teacher left every religion undisturbed; neither did he start a new religion. Yet his life was the greatest vindication of *true* religion. Nay, it was a veritable Parliament of Religions. He traversed the various paths of the Hindu Faith and attained perfection in each. Not content with this, he lived the life of a pious Christian and a devout Muslim reaching the goal of the respective paths. As a result of all his experiments he realized that all religions are at bottom one, they all teach the same truth and lead to the same goal. In his own words, "Different creeds are but different paths to reach the one God; various and different are the ways that lead to the temple of Mother Kâli at Kalighat (near Calcutta). Similarly various are the ways that lead to the house of the Lord. Every religion is nothing but one of such paths that lead men to God." Again, "As a mother in nursing her sick children gives rice and curry to

one, sago and arrowroot to another, and bread and butter to the third, so the Lord God has laid out different paths for different men suitable to their natures. Many are the names of God, and infinite the forms that help us to know Him. By whatsoever name or form you desire to know Him, in that very form and under that very name will you see Him."

What follows? To quote Sri Ramakrishna again, "Every man should follow his own religion. A Christian should follow Christianity, a Moham-medan should follow Mohammedanism. For the Hindu—the ancient path, the path of the Aryan Rishis, is the best. A truly religious man should think that other religions are also so many paths leading to the Truth. We should always maintain an attitude of respect towards other religions."

Thus in Sri Ramakrishna's view the existence of many sects and religions not merely does not stand as obstacles in the way, but actually helps the realization of, Universal Religion. Let sects multiply until each individual will have a religion for himself. As no two individuals can be exactly similar in respect of taste, outlook, and capacity, so no one religion can perfectly satisfy the needs of all. Thus sects ought to multi-

ply until they coincide with humanity itself. But sectarianism will disappear. And with its disappearance will be realized the ideal of a Universal Religion. *In fact, it is already existing, no one has to create it, only each one has to discover it for himself.* But its symphony is marred and distorted by the sharp and dissonant notes of sectarianism. And sectarianism will disappear only when the world understands this new ideal of religious harmony taught by Sri Ramakrishna, when men will learn to see truth in every sect, when men are taught to sympathize with and appreciate every sincere longing of the human heart knowing it to be an urge towards light and truth.

#### CONCLUSION

This ideal of Universal Religion accords most with the modern spirit and temper. It enables religions to work for human welfare as co-operating parts instead of remaining as colliding units. And religious fellowship will bring in the sense of human kinship and brotherhood and enable the collective wisdom and effort of man to work towards the evolution of a complete civilization of humanity and world-culture.

## HINDU WOMEN

By SWAMI VIVIDISHANANDA

In order to understand Hindu women, we have to see them and judge them in the setting of their own cultural traditions and in the light of their own ideals. Let us watch them in their homes, and study them as they live their lives from day to day, as mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters, with a

special reference to the social and religious history of the race. It will give us a true picture of their lives in general—their status in the family, society and nation, their relationships, duties and responsibilities, and their manners, customs and etiquettes.

In India, as everywhere else, man and

woman are the obverse and reverse of the same coin. They supplement each other. Both are great in their respective spheres. Man is strength, woman is beauty. He is the reason that governs, and she is the wisdom that moderates. One cannot be ignored and lost sight of in preference to the other. It is on this account that women have been given as high a place as men. From the *Vedas*, the epics, and the ethical and legal codes of Manu and other lawgivers down to the *Purānas*, the mythologies—all are unanimous on this point.

We shall quote here at random passages from some of our most ancient and authoritative writings in order to substantiate our thesis :

“Before the creation of this phenomenal universe, the first-born Lord of all creatures divided his own self into two halves, so that one half should be male and the other half female.”

“The wife and husband, being equal halves of one substance, are equal in every respect. Therefore both should join and take equal parts in all works, religious or secular.”

“Women must be honoured and adorned by their fathers, husbands, brothers, and brothers-in-law who desire their own welfare.”

“Where women are honoured there the gods are pleased. But where they are treated otherwise no sacred rite yields rewards.”

“The tears of a woman call down the fire of heaven on those who make them flow.”

“Women are pure in all limbs.”

“A woman’s body must not be struck hard, even with a flower, because it is sacred.”

The passages quoted above bring out beautifully the equality of both the sexes and the exceptionally kind treatment women should receive at the hands

of men. Even as the two halves of a fruit contain, in equal proportion, the same qualities and properties, man and woman are equal in the sight of God, and should have equal rights and privileges. Since the dawn of the Hindu civilization, which dates as far back as many many centuries before the Christian era, we find women enjoying like men the same freedom of thought and speech and the same opportunities for education and spiritual practice.

In the *Rig Veda*, the most ancient of the Sanskrit scriptures, we read about many women sages who were seers of Truth and teachers of the highest wisdom. The 126th hymn of the first book of the *Rig Veda* was revealed by a woman, Romashâ by name. The 179th hymn of the same book was revealed by Lopâmudrâ, another inspired woman. We can mention as many as a dozen names of such women seers of Vedic truth. Not only were they great scholars and philosophers, discussing the subtlest metaphysical questions, but they also lived what they taught and set example to others. And they became famous as Brahnavâdinis, the seers and mystics of a very high order. In one of the *Upanishads*, the philosophical portion of the *Vedas*, is recorded the story of Gârgi and Maitreyi, two women seers discussing philosophy with one of the greatest authorities in the ancient lore. It is a record that is not only scholarly, but also inspiring and sublime, showing the highest flight of mystical thought and realization. Instances of women acting as umpires arbitrating philosophical debates can also be cited.

In religious matters, no ritual, ceremony or sacrifice would be considered complete without the co-operation of women. That has been the special injunction of the Hindu scriptures. The Sanskrit word for wife, Saha-dharmini,

meaning "spiritual helpmate," brings home to us this idea. Instead of being a passive instrument for pleasure, the wife should be an active partaker and partner in the spiritual life of her husband. She should share with him the joys and sorrows of life and help him in the realization of the supreme ideal.

Here is the definition of a wife as given in an ancient Sanskrit book :

"A wife is half the man, his best friend ;

A perpetual spring of virtue, pleasure,  
wealth,

His best aid in seeking heavenly bliss ;

A companion in solitude and a father  
in advice,

A mother in all seasons of distress, and

A rest in passing through life's  
wilderness."

This little verse gives a glimpse into the lofty conception of Hindu wifehood. There are many examples of ideal wives in the literatures of India. Of them Sitâ, the heroine of the *Râmâyana*, one of the great epics, tops the list. The Hindus live and die in her name. She inspires the purest and noblest sentiments and receives the willing homage and devout worship of every heart. Sitâ, the ideal wife, mother, and queen in one, the embodiment of purity, chastity, kindness and forgiveness, stands unique.

In secular matters also, women enjoyed with men equal opportunities and privileges. Instances of women occupying high political positions, ruling states, making laws, and administering justice may be quoted by scores.

We may refer here to the wonderful generalship of the Râni of Jhansi, the woman ruler of a small state. During the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, the Râni stood at the head of her troops, dressed as a cavalry officer, and fought against the British like a consummate general and died heroically on the battlefield.

She reminds us of Joan of Arc of France, who has been canonized as a saint by the Catholic Church. Hindu women, well-known for their softness and delicacy, can also be heroic when the occasion demands it.

While drawing a picture of Hindu women in general, we must note a very important point regarding the relative position of a mother and a wife. In a Hindu home, where there is the joint-family system, it is the mother who is the centre of interest and rules. Even when the son marries the wife occupies a secondary position. Instead of being the mistress, she is simply a daughter, and remains so until her womanhood is fulfilled and glorified in being a mother. The Hindus have deified their earthly mother and made her a representative of the Mother of the universe. In that way, every woman has also been made a symbol of the Divine Mother.

The next question which comes to the forefront is the institution of marriage. In ancient times the Hindus had as many as eight forms of marriage, of which love marriage or marriage by courtship was one. We can recount many stories of love marriage that took place in the past.

Sitâ, the ideal of Hindu women, of whom we spoke before, chose Râma as her husband from an assembly of princes invited to a tournament of archery. Sakuntalâ, a maiden brought up in a hermitage, fell in love with Dushyanta, a prince, and they married by exchanging garlands. The story of Sakuntalâ, the translation of which many of you might have read, is embodied in the beautiful Sanskrit drama entitled "The Lost Ring," written by the great poet Kâlidâsa, who has been compared with Shakespeare.

But now on account of the changed conditions of the times the only form

of marriage that is existant and allowed is the union of the bride and the bridegroom by the parents. Neither the girl nor the boy has any hand in the marriage.

It is a fact that young people full of romance and sentimentality often lack in discrimination and contract marriages which are neither good for themselves nor desirable for the community from the standpoint of eugenics. People in the West are becoming aware of the evil effects of love marriage, although the Hindu form of marriage may not be suitable for them. We are told that out of every four marriages there is one divorce in America. So love marriage also has its defects. As marriage is a union of two souls, implying lifelong companionship, the Hindus do not believe in divorce. But a husband can marry again in the presence of the first wife if she is barren, invalid, or ill of some infectious disease.

Critics of India point to the pitiable condition of Hindu widows, for they cannot remarry. It is a fact that the remarriage of widows is not allowed amongst high caste Hindus, and there

is valid reason for it. In the West you hear about Hindu widows' tears, whereas in India we hear about the problems of the unmarried girls of the West. Hindu law-givers say that widows had their chance and should sacrifice for the girls who didn't get any chance. And then the condition of widows is not really so bad as is painted. Widows, as a rule, because of their ideas of chastity, prefer a life of voluntary renunciation and service. Two other weak spots of the Hindu society pointed out by critics are the *purdāh*, or veil, and child-marriage. They are restricted to certain provinces and are fast disappearing with education.

Nobody would deny that some of the social customs and usages connected with our women need reform. Reformation in India, as in every other country, should be along constructive lines. We have to educate our women, and they will solve their own problems. Who are we to say whether widows should remarry? Again, who are we to decide whether women should throw the veil? It is their problems which they alone can best solve.

## LOVE OF GOD

BY SISTER AMALA

Let us search our hearts and examine well the inner recesses of our mind to discover what we love most. Is it God we love, or things of the world? Many men think they must concern themselves only with the food they eat, money they earn, discussions, home-life, and the comforts and pleasures of the body. Seldom do they give their thoughts to the Supreme One from whom all things come. Man competes with his competitor in order to outdo

him. Even at school what child can give his mind wholly to God? There they have competition also, to stand first and above. What trait of pure character can this imbibe? Our finer instinct is often robbed when we stoop to competition. We cannot afford to build up a wall of false superiority, distinction, and degrees, and then hope to know God.

The world's way of pettiness, jealousy, hatred, and envy leads one far from the



path of God. Then you may inquire, "Cannot one of the world attain God, as well as one who has renounced the world?" Attainment of God does not necessitate retiring from the world, and embracing renunciation in the outer sense. But, it certainly does demand complete renunciation of all lower propensities, such as, jealousy, hatred, envy, pettiness, dishonesty, untruthfulness, and selfishness. No one can rob us of our spiritual birthright but ourselves. We are wholly responsible for what we attain or do not attain. We may be surrounded by great spiritual men and yet pass them by because our mind is filled with petty thoughts and therefore we do not have the room to accept holiness.

The mind must be holy to perceive holiness. It must be pure to know purity. Yet, innately all of us are pure and holy, but thoughts of impure nature have clouded and soiled the mirror of our heart to such an extent that the image of pure vision cannot reflect perfectly. The simple illustration of a body of water makes clear to us, how, when its surface is agitated it reflects a broken image of the tree bending over it. When it is still, one can see the exact likeness of the bending tree in the water. So with us, when we are quiet, calm, self-controlled and surrendered to God, then holiness and purity are reflected. Thus wherever these qualities shine, we perceive them.

Fortunate are those who have a pure heart and mind, and seek God as a natural object of their love. Christ tells us, "Blessed are the pure in heart : for they shall see God." We see in the life of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva how his mind from his very childhood was directed towards God. He is a true example of love for God. His radiant beauty, childlike simplicity, sweetness, tenderness, pristine purity,

and divine insight bespeak the attributes of a God-man. His love of God was so deep-rooted, so fundamentally profound and all-consuming that no school, no material position, no walk of social tradition or custom could side-track him from his goal, which was God. He was mad for God. His love for God was supreme and paramount, so that within an astonishingly short period of rapid succession he realized God through his 'Divine Mother of the universe', woven into all the manifestations of Her Power, in the various expressions from time to time in the pages of history. She became the Christ, the Buddha, Mohammed, Zoroaster, Jehovah, Sri Krishna, Râdhâ, Râma, Sitâ, and all Incarnations. She held within Her bosom all manifestations of earth and heaven ! Divine Mother—She—, Mother of all manifested and unmanifested— Eternal—, Pure and Perfect—, Terrible and Beautiful—, beyond mind, beyond speech, beyond time, beyond space—, Effulgent and Infinite ! All this Sri Ramakrishna realized through his mortal instrument in order that we may have proof that the inner conviction of our pure thought may be substantiated and not refuted by social tradition and religious dogma. It is the courage of his conviction, illumination, and realization which has brought him to the foreground as divine inspiration to hearts nurturing similar ideas, unrealized. What a tremendous capacity the name of Sri Ramakrishna has to save and carry on the multitude of souls, eager to follow exactly such realization of universality, true love, and tolerance towards every living creature !

Often it seems, there are as many conceptions of God as there are people. Each one's idea may be slightly varied, but ultimately it reaches the selfsame goal. People who think their picture of God the only one are one-sided, fanatical,

and become easily unbalanced; often, to the point of doing violence, to themselves in other forms. For the *Upanishads* tell us, "The Self is in all and all is in the Self." What does this imply? Certainly not our physical self? No—. It is the Self of which we are all part. God is in all, and all is in God. But we forget this injunction because we are bound by the illusion of life. Sometimes we glimpse through the veil and see the meaning of, "the Self in all, and all in the Self," but to quickly lose the vision of its meaning, because of the changing phenomena of this world.

Sri Ramakrishna had such transparent purity that the reflection of God-

vision was perfectly luminous. It was so radiant and shining that today we are paying homage at the Feet of this Divine Incarnation, who through his blessed life and effulgent consciousness has revealed to us the true love of God. He tells us, "Infinite are the ways leading to God, and by whatever way we travel we shall attain the selfsame goal." He leaves us utterly free to make our own choice, but, he does beg of us tolerance, true understanding, and pure love.

When we attain the goal of our Ideal, we learn that the heart of all Divine Manifestations and Incarnations are fundamentally of One Infinite Substance.

## ATMABODHA

BY SWAMI SIDDHATMANANDA

### INTRODUCTION

The glory of the Self-knowledge has been boldly proclaimed in the *Upanishads* and the *Brahma Sutras* which are the perennial fountain-heads of Vedântic truths. The gist of Vedânta Philosophy is given in the oft-quoted line of a couplet which says, "Brahman alone is real and the world is unreal, and Jiva is Brahman alone and no other." All the scriptures on Vedânta are intended to expound the nature of Brahman, the world, and the Jiva, to show the unreality of the world and to lead one to the conviction of the identity of Jiva and Brahman. The leading authorities on the subject have written a number of manuals dealing with the main features and pointing out the same goal but from different approaches. Such treatises are called *Prakarana Granthas*.

This manual of sixty-eight Slokas which is an excellent aid to the higher study of Vedânta is one of the Minor Works of Sri Sankarâchârya (which come under the class of *Prakarana Granthas*).

After dealing in the very first Sloka, with the essential qualifications required for the pursuit of the highest Truth, the author starts with the central teaching, i.e., Self-knowledge, which is the sole means to final liberation (Verse 2). Rituals etc. may be indirect aids to Jnâna but not to Moksha. Moksha is not a state to be newly attained but is the very nature of the Self. Moksha consists in realizing the real nature of the Self by destroying ignorance, which covers it, through knowledge. It is the forgetting of this real nature of the Self that constitutes all bondage. Such knowledge therefore

is the sole means to liberation (Verses 62-64).

Verses 4-13 deal with the nature of Brahman, Jiva, Avidyâ (ignorance), world, etc. and verses 14-41 expound the discipline to be undergone, viz. Sravana, Manana, Nididhyâsana, the constant practice of which leads to Self-realization. Sravana means hearing of the Highest Truth as taught in the scriptures from a proper Guru. Manana is the continued reflection upon what has been learnt to secure an intellectual conviction. Nididhyâsana is

the continuous meditation on this truth which culminates in the realization of the identity of Jiva and Brahman. When this stage is attained one becomes a Jivanmukta (the living-free) and "the whole world appears as his Self". Verses 42-53 describe the state of an enlightened man who has attained Self-knowledge. The real nature of Brahman is described in verses 54-65 and verses 66-68 conclude by describing the Supreme Bliss of Self-knowledge.

Such, in short, is the gist of this short work by Sankara.

तपोमिः क्षीणपापानां शान्तानां वीतरागिणाम् ।  
मुमुक्षुणामपेक्ष्योऽयमात्मबोधो विधीयते ॥ १ ॥

तपोमिः By the practice of austerities क्षीणपापानां for those whose sins have been attenuated शान्तानां for the tranquil-minded वीतरागिणां for those who are free from desires मुमुक्षुणां for those who long for liberation (from the bondage of ignorance) अपेक्ष्यः intended अयम् this आत्मबोधः (dissertation on) Self-knowledge विधीयते is expounded.

1. This *Atmabodha*<sup>1</sup> (dissertation on Self-knowledge) intended for those whose sins have been attenuated by their austerities, who are tranquil-minded, free from desires, and who are aspirants after liberation, is herein expounded.

<sup>1</sup> *Atmabodha*—It does not mean simply the knowledge of the individual self or the Jivâtman. The individual self is that aspect of the Supreme Self which manifests Itself in every one as the doer and perceiver, due to ignorance; but in reality both are the same. By practice of austerities, the veil of ignorance gradually disappears and the real nature of the true Self is revealed. Thus it culminates in *Atmabodha* on the realization of the identity of the individual self (Jiva) and the Supreme Self (Brahman).

बोधोऽन्यसाधनेभ्यो हि साक्षान्मोक्षसाधनम् ।  
पाकस्य बन्धिवज्ज्ञानं विना मोक्षो न सिध्यति ॥ २ ॥

अन्यसाधनेभ्यः As compared with other means (of attaining liberation) बोधः Self-knowledge हि Verily साक्षात् direct मोक्षसाधनम् only means to the attainment of liberation पाकस्य for cooking बन्धिवज् as fire ज्ञानं knowledge (of the Self) विना without बोधः final liberation न not सिध्यति is attained.

2. Verily as compared with other means, Self-knowledge is a direct and the only means<sup>1</sup> to liberation, even as fire is for cooking. Without knowledge final liberation cannot be attained.

<sup>1</sup> *Direct and the only means*—According to *Vivekachudāmani*, Sloka 6—“... there is no Liberation for anyone without the realization of one's identity with the Ātman, no, not even in the lifetime of a hundred Brahmās put together.”

अविरोधितया कर्म नाविद्यां विनिवर्त्तयेत् ।

विद्याऽविद्यां निहन्त्येव तेजस्तिमिरसंघवत् ॥ ३ ॥

कर्म Rituals अविरोधितया not being opposed in nature अविद्या ignorance न cannot विनिवर्त्तयेत् destroy तेजः तिमिरसंघवत् as light (dispels) accumulated darkness विद्या knowledge (of the Self) एव only अविद्या ignorance निहन्ति destroys.

3. Rituals not being opposed in nature to ignorance cannot destroy it. As light alone dispels accumulated darkness, so Self-knowledge alone can destroy ignorance.

<sup>1</sup> *Rituals*—In *Bhagavad-Gītā*, II. 45, the Lord advises Arjuna not to follow the Karmakāṇḍa or the ritualistic portion of the *Vedas*, being led by various desires for pleasure, power and acquisitions, as persons attached to these cannot have perfect steadiness of mind and therefore cannot be established in the Self.

अवच्छिन्न इवाज्ञानात्तन्नाशे सति केवलः ।

स्वयं प्रकाशते ह्यात्मा मेघापायेऽशुमानिव ॥ ४ ॥

( आत्मा The Self ) अज्ञानात् due to ignorance अवच्छिन्न इव appearing as if divided ( but really not so ) तत् that नाशे सति being destroyed केवलः undivided whole ( भवत् becomes ) ; मेघ अपायि when the clouds disperse अशुमान् the sun इव like आत्मा the Self स्वयं Itself हि expletive प्रकाशते manifests.

4. The Self appears to be divided as many due to ignorance but when it is destroyed the Self is but One. It manifests Itself (when ignorance is destroyed) even as the sun shines forth when the clouds disperse.

अज्ञानकलूषं जीवं ज्ञानाभ्यासाद्धिनिर्मलम् ।

कृत्वा ज्ञानं स्वयं नश्येज्जलं कतकरेणुवत् ॥ ५ ॥

अज्ञानकलूषं जीवं Jiva (the individual soul) defiled by ignorance ज्ञानाभ्यासात् by constant practice of knowledge हि indeed निर्मलं कृत्वा having rendered pure जलं water (निर्मलं कृत्वा having purified) कतकरेणुवत् even as the particles of water-purifying nut (settle down) ज्ञानं knowledge स्वयं itself नश्येत् ceases.

5. Even as the particles of water-purifying nut<sup>1</sup> settle down with the impurities in muddy water after purifying it, so also knowledge ceases when the Jiva defiled by ignorance is rendered pure by the constant practice of it.

<sup>1</sup> *Water-purifying nut etc.*—The nut has the property of precipitating the impurities of muddy water and in the process of purification the particles of the nut themselves sink down along with the impurities in the water. Thus as water is purified by being freed from both the particles of the nut and other impurities so the Jiva is liberated from all bondages by the practice of knowledge and attains a stage which is beyond knowledge (Vidyā) and ignorance (Avidyā).

संसारः स्वप्नतुल्यो हि रागद्वेषादिसंकुलः ।

स्वकाले सत्यवद्भाति प्रबोधे सत्यसद्भावेत् ॥ ६ ॥

संसारः The world स्वप्नतुल्यः is like a dream हि indeed रागद्वेषादिसंकुलः full of attachment, aversion etc. स्वकाले in the dream state सत्यवत् as real भाति appears प्रबोधे सति when one wakes up असत् unreal भवेत् proves to be.

6. The world is like a dream full of attachment, aversion etc. During dream state it (the dream) appears to be real but when one wakes up, it turns out to be unreal.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

We offer our cordial greetings to our readers and sympathisers on the threshold of the New Year which is particularly important to us inasmuch as the Centenary Birthday of Sri Ramakrishna falls in February of this year.

Swami Vivekananda's *Lecture in Oakland* forms a new and interesting feature in this number. . . . At the advent of this year, we echo *The Voice of the Himalayas* in the midst of the din and bustle of modern life. . . . Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar deals exhaustively with the creative assimilation of world-forces by India in his *World-culture in India Today*. . . . *Credo* is a nice little poem from the pen of Prof. E. E. Speight. . . . Dr. Surendra Kisor Chakraborty gives an account of *The Atharva Veda* within a small compass. . . . *Prayer* is a sermon delivered by Swami Nikhilananda at the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre, New York. . . . Dr. Sudhindra Bose gives us an interesting account of *Jane Addams* who has been described as America's greatest woman. . . . Swami Ranganathananda belongs to the Ramakrishna Mission. He points out how *The Ideal of Universal Religion* accords most with the modern spirit and temper.

. . . *Hindu Women* is one of the popular Radio talks in Washington, D.C. by Swami Vividishananda, Head of the Vedanta Society there. . . . Sister Amala is a new contributor of ours. She dwells upon the proper attitude before one possesses *Love of God*. Swami Siddhatmananda is a member of the Ramakrishna Mission. He undertakes the work of translating *Atmabodha* into English with useful notes from this month.

### WHAT HINDUISM OFFERS

Modern man can't live without having or creating sensations. Dr. Ambedkar has proved his modernity by creating a sensation. It is not the doctor's fault but that of the age we live in. Mr. Sarma is another instance to the point.

Let us see what Dr. Ambedkar wants. Nobody in his senses can deny that there are some extreme orthodox people in some parts of India; and they are so extreme that they would not allow the untouchables to use the same wells, schools, etc. with them. But there are others, and they are in good majority, who welcome, and give preference to, the untouchables in these matters. So

if the former might have given offence to the doctor the latter are there to do all for him. Why then is he not satisfied? What really pinches him? Untouchables are admitted in many temples and schools and are allowed to use wells with the caste Hindus. And there are new ones for them and many more can be built.

Suppose there are some schools and temples which are not open to them. Why should he grudge this? There is the Mayo College. Ordinary people do not offer Satyāgraha to get admission into it. Nor do they suffer from any inferiority complex on that account. But for the government grant, the Hindu University would not have allowed Muslim students to get admission into it. And we don't think any self-respecting Mohammedan would have grudged it. For they would have known that it was meant for the Hindus only. Similarly if there are some schools which are meant exclusively for certain sections of Hindus, there ought not to be any sensible objections against that. If the Brāhmanas start a school meant for their children only, will the Kāyasthas and Vaidyas object to it. Never. If they feel any inconvenience in educating their children, they would start another school for their own children and would perhaps appoint Brāhmana teachers in it for the fun of having Brāhmana paid servants, if they be so low and vindictive. But what they would never do is to cringe and crouch for admission into the Brāhmana school. That is derogatory to self-respect. If such be the cause of Dr. Ambedkar's annoyance, we are sorry to say that he has lowered his position, and that, unnecessarily.

But we don't think he is so shallow. There is a deeper reason. He is annoyed at the inequality, which seems to him to be fundamental to Hinduism.

Yes, Hinduism admits that there are and should always be inequalities of numerous kinds in every society. And if there be any human society which does not admit it in principle (for, in practice there are inequalities everywhere) it is because its sociological studies have been imperfect. The Doctor's threat to leave Hindu fold unless a miracle of levelling down all inequalities in theory and practice happens over-night would have a semblance of reason if Hinduism had prevented him and his class from rising to the highest rung of society by imbibing the Brāhmanic culture, or if it had stood in their way of getting this culture. But neither Hinduism nor the majority of men professing it does either. Suppose Dr. Ambedkar and his followers proclaim this day that they are all Brāhmanas and betake themselves with all vigour to imbibing the Vedic and Paurānic culture, which has given the Brāhmanas their position, whatever that be, what is there to prevent them from being Brāhmanas, the highest caste? Nothing will prevent them from learning Sanskrit, studying the Vedas and other scriptures and practising the good manners and professions. They can likewise proclaim themselves Kshatriyas or Vaishyas or any one or more of the various castes.

Others will no doubt not give or take their daughters in marriage or dine with them. But they do the same among themselves too. Again Brāhmanas do not intermarry or inter-dine even among themselves, what to speak of, with Kshatriyas and other caste Hindus. And why should one be so eager to have all these by force, so to say. If I refuse to dine with you, you, if you have self-respect, should also refuse to do the same with me. But even this intermarrying and inter-dining is slowly coming into vogue. Take

away the cultural inequality and all these inequalities that are worth removing will disappear of themselves. Will the mere formal conversion of these followers of the Doctor into Christianity or Islam bring about any cultural improvement in them? And what classes of Christians or Moham-medans will have matrimonial connection with them? Certainly those alone who are culturally and economically on a par with them. Is it any very great achievement? Is it not far better for the Doctor to devote his intellect and energy to lifting up his followers culturally and economically, to Brâhmanhood or Kshatriyahood, or to the Rishihood of a Nandan? We should ask the Doctor to study the Hindu scriptures with an unbiased mind and to see for himself if Brâhmanhood, to which level it is the end of Hindu society to raise all, is not the highest ideal of humanity, and if true Hinduism and even the majority of modern Hindus offer any resistance to its attainment by the proper method of imbibing the culture. We offer no special charm or privilege to Dr. Ambedkar and his followers. Hinduism gives no bribe, it offers the best culture to all and gives them the opportunity to profit by it.

### LOVE AND POWER

God is all love. Why do we say that? Is it because we find the internal and the external world governed by the laws of love alone, or because we feel an irresistible impulse of seeing them so governed? Both are far from truth. Nature is as much cruel as loving, as much terrible as benign. And to them who are conscious of the internal world it is but a replica of the outer one, only far more intensified. Nor is it a fact that we want the world to be governed by love alone. What

will we do, if we are asked to choose between love and power—love devoid of all power and power devoid of all love? Shall we be satisfied with our selection? Certainly not. Now if we do not see anywhere in the two worlds the play of love alone and if we do not want it either, what justification have we to call God all love? If God had not had that protective power of His, how many of us, if any at all, would have gone to Him, or called on Him, or built churches and temples for Him?

It is such a simple logic, so obvious to common sense, that it is difficult to believe that civilized man means what he expresses in words, viz. God is all love. He can never feel it for any length of time. In some transcendental moments, when he is wonderfully saved from a great danger, or when his very being is melted in love, he may exclaim, "Ah, God is all love"; but that can never be his abiding conception of Him. God is more mighty than loving. This is what reason says and facts bear out and the sum total of human emotions corroborates.

And His power is not always wedded to love; its use is seen as much in destruction as in creation. God is as much the Lord of creation and preservation as of destruction. Even in His acts of preservation He keeps, modifies, and destroys. It takes as much care and attention for Him to create as to destroy. Acts of creation evoke as much feeling in Him as those of destruction. He weeps as much for world-conflagrations as He smiles for the enjoyments of the civilized world, or is angry with the barbarism of the cannibals. These might terrify certain ostriches. But these are naked truths, neither beautiful nor hideous, but mere truths. God has equal liking for creation and destruction, equal joy

in both. He understands that creation is predestined for destruction, that the goal of creation is destruction as much as the latter is the goal of the former. He diversifies and He unites, and He knows the simple truth that unity emerges through the destruction of the smaller circles of diversification, till the biggest circle vanishes and the ultimate unity is reached. In God the question of love and cruelty does not arise. It crops up in the limited human and other beings with likes and dislikes. The Infinite can have neither of them.

So the God of the world is Mahâ-Sakti, Almighty. He is neither loving nor cruel. If He is one He is the other too, and in equal degree. Hence the Vedic Rishis and the Tântic Siddhas have conceived of Him in twofold aspect, the benign and the terrible. Both the aspects however do not appeal to each and all. The ordinary devotees, who are in overwhelming majority, worship Him on auspicious days which naturally rouse up romantic and poetic feelings, with sweet and beautiful flowers, incense, and the like. But there is another class of devotees who love to worship the terrible aspect of the Lord and they do it on, what appears to the other group, dreadful and inauspicious days in horrible places like the bone-strewn cremation grounds with things that send terror into the hearts of the other devotees, viz. with blood and flesh and wine and skulls and cremation fire.

Who are wrong? Either both or none. We cannot judge the one with the other's ideal. To be fair to both

we must judge each according to his own ideal. If we are to sit on judgment on the ideals themselves, we find both of them one-sided—both of them are good in certain aspects and bad in certain others. Each needs to be supplemented by the other. But we cannot graft the one on the other, that will spoil both. We cannot worship Kâli on the full-moon night and Krishna on the new-moon night; and the garland of the one cannot be interchanged with that of the other. The Sâdhakas of Power must have things and conditions which will naturally tend to rouse up the latent energies in them; the Sâdhakas of Love must have surroundings to evoke love in them. But let none think that Kâli is all Power and no Love, and Vishnu is all Love and no Power. Those who look at the four hands of their symbols will at once realize the truth. But in one there is predominance of Love and in the other there is predominance of Power. To the Hindu, God is not Love alone nor Power alone but Love and Power both—God is Love and Power Absolute.

His Love does not always bring sweet enjoyments but carries terrible death too. His power is not merely creative but destructive too. If He knows how to love He knows also how to be cruel. In fact He is none. Weak man imposes on Him the qualities he likes best. The Lord enjoys Himself creating a phantom Many. And what rigour of law and logic with us, what seriousness, what a divine (?) urge for reform!



## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**EASTERN LIGHTS.** By Prof. Mahendranath Sircar, M.A., Ph.D. *The Arya Publishing House, 63, College Street, Calcutta.* Pp. 305. Price Rs. 4/- or 8 sh. only.

The book under review is a collection of lectures on Indian religion and philosophy delivered by the Author, in Rome on an invitation, and at other places in Europe in 1934. There are altogether twelve lectures falling under three distinct divisions. The first quarter gives in a nutshell the philosophy of the *Upanishads* and the *Gītā* and the *Bhāgavata Purāna* and the *Tantras*. The first two are the universal scriptures of the Hindus, the second two are respectively of the Vaishnavas and the Śāktas, giving the philosophy of Love and Power. So we see the selection is very wise. These books or groups of books give a complete picture of the religion and philosophy of the entire Hindu world from the earliest times to almost the modern days. The main feature of the author's exposition of these philosophies is his complete freedom from all kinds of bias. In drawing out the system of the *Bhāgavata Purāna* the author is a Vaishnava and in the explanation of the *Tāntrika* philosophy he is a *Tāntrika* but he is always a Samkarite in his philosophical outlook, though in the realm of values he is, or rather seems to be, a follower of Aurobindo.

In the second quartet the author deals with the Real, the Beautiful, the Values, and the Cosmic Man. These are perhaps the best lectures of the whole series. Here each of the Indian concepts is placed side by side with the corresponding ones of the more important philosophical systems of the West, and after a careful analysis of their similarities and dissimilarities, their excellences and defects, the Indian concepts as presented by Samkara philosophy have been given the highest place. It is a delight to follow the author through these reverential analyses. In his lecture on the Beautiful he has parted company with Samkara. Here the author is a Vaishnava, he has not even much to say about the sublime beauty of Śāktism—he has devoted one short paragraph to it. He speaks of the transcendental beauty no doubt but that is not Samkara's. "Beauty is expressive", says the author

but perhaps this is not the whole truth. Beauty is *Rasa* which is more suggestive than expressive. The finest expression is but a hint leading on to a far richer world of intuition, where the forms and contents of beauty dissolve themselves in Beauty itself. The author says, "The Indian thinkers have given to Truth the supreme place and category—and Truth is transcendental. . . . True beauty lies here. Beyond it has no range of existence." He does not appear to share the view, "beauty lies deep in being." The Indian conception of Truth however is *Rasa* showing thereby the identity of Truth and Beauty. Whatever that be, the author has given a very fine picture of the Indian conception of the Beautiful. While not harnessing the Beauty to the Good, he has taken it to the spirit. He quotes Aurobindo, "Art for Art's sake certainly . . . but also for the soul's sake, for the spirit's sake." "Cosmic Man" is a peculiar idea of the Hindus, which the author would have done well to make more clear to the West. On the whole this quartet reveals a depth and freshness of thought which is rarely seen in academic circles.

The last four lectures bring the author's survey of Indian philosophy and religion to the very modern days. Here in a historical perspective he shows the different phases of development as represented in some of the modern movements started by Rammohun, Dayananda, Ramakrishna, and Aurobindo. One finds the same spirit of reverence and enquiry in these lectures too. This is one of the few books which give a true light of Indian philosophy and religion. The author has a claim to originality and scholarship.

**HOW TO LOSE INDIA?** By C. S. Ranga Iyer. *Associated Business Corporation Ltd.* 14, McLeod Road, Lahore. 411 pp. Price Rs. 5 net.

Mr. Ranga Iyer's three books on the present politics of India—viz. *India in the Crucible*, *India: Peace and War*, and the present volume—deserve to be read by all, whether they agree with the conclusions of the author or not, and whether they tread in practical politics or not. Extensive signi-

ficant quotations from the speeches of the Parliamentary party leaders and the editorial comments of powerful papers with the author's incisive and witty criticisms thereof give one a pleasant and instructive reading. A better political history of present-day India can hardly be got. Mr. Ranga Iyer, it seems, has done much serious thinking over these topics; and we are sure the public will go through the pages of this new book of his and will brood over the conclusions he has drawn. The book is not so irreverent as some critics would have us believe, but the author could certainly have afforded to be a little more reverent—that would have enhanced the value of the book. But perhaps politics is a field where opponents are sometimes driven to run into excess. Those, however, who are above party politics and who want to dive deeper than the mere newspaper informations, would surely welcome the volume, notwithstanding some bitter remarks here and there about persons who are revered by many social and political workers of the day.

**SELF-REALIZATION. LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF RAMANA MAHARSHI.** By B. V. Narasimha Swamy. Published by *Niranjanananda Swamy, Sarvadhikari, Sri Ramanashrama, Tiruvannamalai, Madras.* 286 pp. Price Re. 1-4.

In the days of cheap Avatâras and prophets and uplifters of the world, it is a solace to come across with the life and teachings of a real Maharshi, Ramana Maharshi, whose own self-realization is based on the solid rock of hard Tapas, and who asks people more to look to their own Self than to run about doing so-called good to the world. This lifelong beating about the bush which goes by the name of modernism, this calm, humble, and withal dignified saint deprecates by sheer indifference. To him the realization of the Self—not mystery-mongering nor holding converse with superior beings or ghosts, or their visions, or photism or psychic powers and the whole host of what generally goes

by the name of religion—is the only aim of life. With it all is obtained, with it the world is served best; without it man is but a beggar and does more harm than good to the world, his best wishes notwithstanding. This is the essence of his instruction to all who go to him.

He does not preach avoidance of work nor deprecate Bhakti or extol Jnâna, but guides all along their own lines of progress with a love and care that great souls alone know how to bestow. His silence and apparent inactivity are far more dynamic and eloquent than the whirlwind activities of our platform leaders. He has not taken upon himself the task of bettering the world or bringing down the Kingdom of Heaven on this world of dust, but sees the sure working of the great Planner, enjoys it, and in enjoying helps it, knowing all the while what it is worth. He has not made himself a stone nor advises others to dry up kindness to the last drop; he weeps while others weep, shares sorrows and griefs of the world, shows ways out of them, and yet his calm indifference is not broken any time.

The author has done justice to the man he admires, without indulging in hyperboles or making the atmosphere too rarefied for ordinary mortals. His restraint is admirable, style good, and thoughts clear. The typography and the general get-up of the book are also good.

**FIVE HYMNS TO SRI ARUNACHALA.** Translated into English from the original of Sri Ramana Maharshi. *Niranjanananda Swamy, Sarvadhikari, Sri Ramanashrama, Tiruvannamalai, Madras.* 48 pp. Price 4 as.

The readers will surely feel curious to know some of the teachings of Ramana Maharshi. These five hymns will give them a better understanding of the man and the working of his mind. They create an atmosphere of divine love when chanted in the original. The English rendering has preserved the fervour of the heart to a great extent.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### BIRTHDAY OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

The birthday of Swami Vivekananda falls this year on the 16th of this month.

### SRI RAMAKRISHNA CENTENARY MEETING IN CALCUTTA

At a crowded public meeting held on December 7, 1935 under the presidentship of S. J. Sarat Chandra Bose, at the Albert Hall, Calcutta, an appeal was made by several speakers to the people of Bengal to celebrate the birth centenary of Sri Ramakrishna in a worthy manner. S. J. Bejoy Krishna Bose, Secretary, Ramakrishna Centenary Committee referred to the wonderful response they had received from such distant places as Poland, Africa, America, France, Germany and England. The scheme under contemplation he said, included the inauguration of a central relief fund and would require about 5 to 6 lacs of rupees. So far about 20,000 rupees had been collected. He appealed to Bengal to rise to the height of the occasion and exert her best for the coming celebration in February next. Prof. Joygopal Banerjee emphasized on the special significance of the Ramakrishna Centenary. Ramakrishna, he said, was not only the foremost religious teacher of modern India but also the preacher of a new religion to the world at large. Ramakrishna, Dr. Kalidas Nag remarked, brought a new message in this machine age, and it was due to him that India at present occupied a position which was unique in the whole world. Sreejuktâ Umasashi Devi said that Ramakrishna's Sâdhanâ laid the foundation of modern Bengal. He came at a critical moment of Bengal's social history and stemmed the tide of materialism which was on the point of sweeping away young Bengal from the moorings of the national culture. Prof. B. K. Sarkar dwelt on the eternal and imperishable character of the teachings of Ramakrishna, which was invaluable to every man irrespective of caste, creed and nationality. Within a hundred years from his birth Ramakrishna had conquered the world. Br. Amulya Kumar of Belur Math pointed out that Ramakrishna's silent Sâdhanâ lay at the root of the present awakening of national life. In conclusion the President laid stress on the fact that Ramakrishna's teachings emphasized the

basic unity and common aim of all religions. Service and sacrifice, he declared, were inseparably bound up in his teachings. He appealed to young Bengal to exert its utmost to make the centenary celebrations a success.

### SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA

#### PUBLIC RECEPTION AT ALBERT HALL

There was a big gathering at Albert Hall on Monday the 16th December at 6 P.M. when a public reception was accorded to Srimath Swami Prabhavananda of the Ramakrishna Mission in America by the citizens of Calcutta.

The Hon. Mr. Justice Dwarka Nath Mitter presided.

The address was read by the Maharaja of Cossimbazar.

In replying to the address Swamiji first of all thanked the audience for the great appreciation which they had shown to him for the little attempts which he had made in the West in preaching the divine message of God there. During these twelve years of service in the West he had witnessed that the message of Sri Ramakrishna as preached by their revered leader Swami Vivekananda had conquered the heart of thousands in the world. From that he could realize that something which India had within her grip always makes the people of the West to realize within their heart of hearts the individuality of this land of the sages of the ancient time.

In conclusion the speaker appealed to the youths of the country to study India and its traditions and thus make themselves great in the world.

With a vote of thanks to the chair and the speaker the meeting terminated late in the evening.

### THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE, BENARES

#### A SHORT STATEMENT OF THE ACTIVITIES DURING 1934

The activities of the Home during the year 1934 were under the following heads:—

*Indoor General Hospital:* There are 145 beds in the various wards. The total number of cases admitted was 1,698 of whom 1,094 were cured and discharged, 188 left treatment, 165 were discharged otherwise, 180 died and 121 remained under treatment at the end of the year.

The daily average of indoor cases was 118. The total number of surgical cases in the indoor hospital was 187, most of which were performed under chloroform.

*Refuge for aged and invalid men :* There were 8 permanent inmates in this refuge during the year.

*Refuge for aged and invalid women :* In this refuge there were 7 inmates during the year. With a view to making an extension of this refuge the construction of a building has been undertaken, the cost of which has been estimated at Rs. 40,000/-. The Home hope to complete it in the near future with the help of the generous public.

*Refuge for paralytic patients :* During the year under review 14 paralytic cases in all were accommodated in this refuge, of which 3 were provided for under the Lachmi Narain Paralytic Fund.

*Dharamsala for poor and helpless :* During the year about 192 people were given shelter and food under this head. The annual income of Rs. 273/- accruing from the Chandri Bibi Dharamsala Fund being insufficient had to be supplemented with money from other sources.

*Girl workers' Training Home :* In this Home there were 2 inmates up to May and 1 up to August during the year. They helped the work of the women's Department which is conducted solely by the ladies and received their education under the guidance of the Lady Superintendent.

*Out-Door Dispensaries :* The number of the new cases treated during the year in the Out-door Dispensaries attached to the Home was 49,679 as against 44,765 of the previous year and the number of repeated cases was 80,553 as against 71,246 of the previous year. These include the patients treated at the Branch Out-door Dispensary of the Home at Shivala where 17,100 new cases were treated and the number of repeated cases was 51,738. The daily average attendance was 856 and the total number of surgical cases was 894.

*Out-door help to poor invalids and helpless ladies :* There were 120 permanent recipients of outdoor relief and it cost the Home Rs. 2,189-11-6 in cash (including Rs. 175/- yearly interest derived from the Audhar Chandra Dass Charity Fund especially constituted for money relief) and 116 mds. 28 seers of rice and Atta besides blankets and clothings.

*Special and occasional relief :* Under the head 1,004 persons were given help in the

shape of books for students, food for strangers or railway fare for stranded travellers or similar relief as occasion demanded.

*Finance :* The receipts for the year under General Fund were Rs. 88,783-5-1 (including the amount received as endowment and meant for investment) and expenditures Rs. 32,709-9-6. The receipts under Building Fund were Rs. 14,252-11-5 and expenditures Rs. 8,147-8-0 and the receipts under N. C. Das Estate were Rs. 602-11-9 and expenditures Rs. 280-15-8.

#### THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH CHARITABLE DISPENSARY, MADRAS REPORT FOR 1934

The number of patients treated during the year under report is 68,913 of which 27,881 were new cases and 41,082, repeated cases. This shows an increase of 1,992 over last year's number. The total number of surgical operations is 3,250.

With the completion of repairs of the newly purchased building, the dispensary has been shifted to it, and the problem of accommodation has thus been solved. The present needs of the dispensary are two-fold, viz. (i) a general fund for the maintenance of the dispensary and its workers, and (ii) up-to-date modern appliances and other necessary outfits. We hope the generous public will come forward to remove these two needs, as they have done many others. Contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged by:—The President, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Mylapore, Madras.

#### THE RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA CENTRE, NEW YORK REPORT FOR 1934-35

On June 10, 1934, the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center of New York brought its work to a close, after a highly successful first season; and in the same week Swami Nikhilananda, founder and leader of the Center, sailed to Europe for a three months' vacation, during which time he found the opportunity of meeting many people interested in Hindu thought. The first meeting of the new season was held at the chapel of the Center, on Sunday, September 9th, shortly after the Swami's return to America.

During the current season, a number of special celebrations have been held at the Centre, all of which were very well attended, and in addition several dinners, at which notable speakers of New York have addressed the students and guests of the Centre.

At the service in celebration of the Durgā Pujā, on Sunday, October 21, 1934, Swami Nikhilananda delivered a sermon on "Mother-Worship." The same evening, at the dinner in the same connection, Miss Josephine MacLeod, Dr. Charles Fleischer, Swami Nikhilananda and Mr. Stansbury Hagar addressed the guests.

On Tuesday, December 25th, a Christmas service was held in place of the regular Upanishad class. The subject of Swami Nikhilananda's sermon was "A Hindu View of Christ." On this occasion there was a special altar, with the picture of the Madonna and Child, while the whole chapel was appropriately decorated with Christmas greens and a Christmas-tree. There was also a programme of Hindu music; and refreshments were served. In addition, Swami Nikhilananda made a gift to everyone present of a copy of his lecture on "Christ, the Great Yogi." There was an unusually large attendance on this evening.

The birthday of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated in the chapel on Sunday, January 27, 1935. Swami Nikhilananda spoke on "Swami Vivekananda's Ideal of Man-Making Religion." A special altar under the large portrait of Swami Vivekananda, decorated with flowers and lighted candles, gave a festive spirit to the occasion. At the dinner in further celebration of Swamiji's birthday, held the following Sunday, the speakers were: Miss Ruth St. Denis, Mr. Joseph Auslander, the well-known poet and lecturer, Dr. John Howland Lathrop, pastor of the Unitarian Church of Brooklyn, Miss Josephine MacLeod, Swami Nikhilanda, and Mr. Stansbury Hagar.

The ninety-ninth birthday of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated in the chapel on Sunday, March 10th, at which time Swami Nikhilananda delivered a sermon on "The Religious Experiences of a Great Master." A large quantity of flowers brought by the devotees were used to decorate the altar, while the pictures of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother, and Swami Vivekananda were garlanded with flowers also. On an additional altar was placed a small image of Sri Rama-

krishna. There was a musical programme and refreshments were served. After the service, Swami Nikhilananda presented to everyone a card with the picture of Sri Ramakrishna and some of his sayings printed on it. At the dinner on the following Sunday; Mr. Dhan Gopal Mukerji, Professor H. P. Fairchild, of New York University, Dr. Oweh Hillman, of Brown University, Mr. Stansbury Hagar, and Swami Nikhilananda addressed the guests.

In addition to his many other duties, Swami Nikhilananda has spoken before numerous other groups of people, here and elsewhere. Among these were: The Society of Spiritual Arts; a group of student nurses at Maxwell Hall, in the Medical Centre; a memorial service for the late Professor William R. Shepherd, in St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University; a group of students at the Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts; and the men's club of St. Mark's-in-the-Bouwerie church, New York.

On Sunday, April 7th, Swami Nikhilananda announced that it would be necessary for him to discontinue his work at the Centre for some time, in order to receive medical treatment and take a complete rest, as a result of overwork. The work of the Centre was not interrupted, however, as the Swami was able to obtain the services of some friends and students to conduct the lectures and classes. The attendance at both lectures and classes, during his absence, has been very encouraging as an indication of the strong spirit of loyalty which has grown up among the students during the two years of the Centre's existence.

The schedule of lectures and classes during the past year has been as follows: On Sundays, at 11 A.M., a general service with lecture on some subject of religious or philosophical interest. On Tuesdays, at 8-30 P.M., a study-class on the *Katha Upanishad*. On Wednesdays, at 8 P.M., an informal class on the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna. On Fridays, at 8-30 P.M., a study-class on Sankara's *Vivekachudamani*. The attendance at all these services has been steady and satisfactory.

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**NOTICE:**—The February issue of *Prabuddha Bharata*, which will contain much more than the usual matter, being the Centenary Number, is likely to be delayed for some days. So we request our Subscribers to give us time till the 10th of February, 1936.

duct of individual men and nations under His Kingship are no mean factor that can contribute to peace and harmony among mankind, and that to such an extent as could be hardly measured by man. In this age of science and reason, it may seem an insignificant argument and a mere prattling, but one can hardly deny the effectiveness of morals that are inspired by actual belief in Divine Justice. But for it, the face of the Earth and the destinies of men and nations would have been far worse than what we see today.

#### IV

It is contended that human brotherhood is broken up in a serious way by want of harmony that prevails among the religions of the world. Wherever any religion appears in an organized manner, it tends to create a difference with other religions, it makes an artificial, religious aristocracy, the existence of which is a menace to the fellowship of man in general. This is a fact so glaring in the pages of history and even now in the modern world that one has to admit emphatically the futility of religions preached with motives of worldly gain and irreligious persuasion. Religions with tyrannical and oppressive propaganda, with lifeless forms and superstitions have proved a stumbling block against the progress of humanity. They have ruined races and nations and have been enslavers of men, rather than their liberators. Hence, established religions have lost their sway over the world, but the founders of those religions have and shall continue to have homage from all sincere souls the world over. When an organized religion tries to conquer sister religions which are less organized and less powerful, it creates disorder in the religious world and destroys human brotherhood. Instead of keeping the

windows of the heart wide open to the truths and excellences in historic faiths, it carries on its ruthless propaganda against them through missionary zeal and tactics and thereby fails to co-operate with them in the moral and spiritual uplift of people. The time has come when every religion should find grounds of unity in other religions and should learn to appreciate them on their distinctive merits. Days of bigotry and dogmatism have been numbered, the propagation of faiths by means of the sword can hardly be tolerated by the modern world. So, if any religion has to exist as a potent force in society, it must do so not by antagonism or controversy, but by its breadth of outlook and its intrinsic beauty and purity. Then alone can it bring peace to the distracted world of warring creeds.

The church as it stands now in the world is responsible to a great extent for the scepticism and materials that are rampant among the majority of educated men and women of all lands. People do not find a scientific outlook and a genuine touch of spirituality in the company of most churchmen. Over and above this, the promoters of churches are dabbling in the wars between the classes and the masses, between capital and labour, between imperialism and socialism. This is one of the main causes why the church has degenerated and impaired its own dignity. The modern world cries for a better interpretation of religious life and its utility. It seeks for a rapid deliverance from the evils that civilization has carried in its train. Is the church bold enough to encounter the problems of modern life? A modern churchman is required to bring into relief the real utility of religion that he describes on the pulpit, and at the same time he must be a firm promoter of all that sheds a lustre upon religion.

His private and public life must be a living testimony to what he preaches for his own good and for the good of humanity. He has to proclaim to the world that God has no special race or nation favourite to Himself, He is not confined to any books or doctrines, He is not manifest in any single prophet, and that all men are equal in His eyes as they are all His children. If religion is preached in a universal spirit and toleration is maintained, so far as different faiths are concerned, it is sure to bring forth brotherhood among religions through which men will find the common bonds of unity and amity.

Human brotherhood, again, is limited by social privileges and restrictions. In the name of religion and social custom, people claim special rights and tyrannize over other people who are considered inferior to them. Differences in physical characteristics, languages, and in manners and customs are non-essential matters to be overlooked, but these have been made too prominent by men of little learning, racial vanity, and mean outlook. People do not understand that variety is the plan of nature, but not its law. Unity is the law, the only principle that man has to learn by a steady pursuit of knowledge with an open and all-embracing heart. One may remain an Indian and another a European without losing each other's sympathy; similarly the capitalist and the labourer, the professor and the fool, the white and the coloured, the Brahmin and the Pariah may live in society without hating each other and may cultivate mutual goodwill. Men feel themselves foreign to one another due to want of culture and wide vision. Some time ago Prof. Gilbert Murray wrote an interesting letter to Dr. Rabindranath Tagore in which he observed : "There are touchy

and vain people in all parts of the world, just as there are criminals in all parts; just as there are thinkers, artists, poets, men of learning; just as there are saints and sages. And it is valuable to remember that, as Plato pointed out long ago, while criminals tend to cheat and fight one another, and stupid people to misunderstand one another, there is a certain germ of mutual sympathy between people of good will or good intelligence. An artist cannot help liking good art, a poet good poetry, a man of science good scientific work, from whatever country it may spring. And that common love of beauty or truth, a spirit indifferent to races and frontiers, ought, among all the political discords and antagonisms of the world, to be a steady well-spring of good understanding, a permanent agency of union and brotherhood."

## V

The Vedānta preaches the unity of God and the divinity of man, at the same time it holds out the hope of highest manifestation of the divinity to every man, nay to every being, however small, in the scheme of the physical universe. Swami Vivekananda used to say : "When a man has reached the highest, when he sees neither man nor woman, neither sex nor creed, nor colour, nor birth, nor any of these differentiations, but goes beyond and finds that divinity which is the real man behind every human being,—then alone he has reached the universal brotherhood, and that man alone is a Vedāntist." This is the ideal towards which every man either consciously or unconsciously has to proceed in his gradual march to Truth and herein lies the secret of human brotherhood which races, creeds, and nations need to discover and practise more in matters political, social, economic, and religious.

# THE HINDU IDEAL OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION

BY PROF. AKSHAYA KUMAR BANERJEA, M.A.

## MAN'S PARADOXICAL POSITION IN THE WORLD

Man is a rational, moral, æsthetic, and spiritual being with the inherent consciousness of freedom of thought, feeling and will, and also of some ideals to be realized by the exercise of this freedom; and at the same time he is a sensuous being embodied in a psycho-physical organism living and moving in a phenomenal world of changes and diversities governed by immutable laws of nature. He is consequently placed in a unique and puzzling situation. When he looks upon himself as identified with this psycho-physical organism, he finds himself to be one of the innumerable creatures of nature, a slave of the forces and laws operating in its various departments. It is the diversities of this world that supply materials for his self-preservation and self-development,—that nourish his body with food, drink, clothing, and shelter, that provide his mind with objects of perception and thought, desire and aversion, enjoyment and sufferings, that produce various kinds of agreeable and disagreeable impression upon him and compel him to put forth energy from within to react upon and adjust himself to them. He appears to be one of the products of nature. His existence appears to be originated from, sustained by, and at the end of its career merged in this material world. Some schools of thinkers have found nothing in the body and the mind of man, which he does not owe to this world of physical phenomena. Like the phenomena of all other departments of nature, human thoughts, feelings and actions also appear to be governed by

the laws of necessity. He is a part and parcel of nature, and as such he has got no real freedom, no ideal which he can truly realize by dint of his own free efforts. His apparent freedom of thought, feeling and will is illusory, for these also are governed by natural laws. The world is constituted of diverse kinds of objects and facts related to and dependent upon one another in various ways, and man is only one of them. This is the position of man as a sensuous being.

Had man been principally a sensuous being, distinguished from other animals only by the presence of some additional faculties and functions, his relation to the phenomenal world would not be so much complicated and puzzling. He would be what nature would make him. He would live and move, grow and decay, enjoy and suffer, act and be acted upon, according to the laws of nature, under pressure of the circumstances in which he would be placed. He would know the phenomena purely as they would appear to him and produce impressions upon his senses and modifications in his mental states. There would be evolution in the human species in the same way as in the other species of plants and animals.

But man has a consciousness of freedom inherent in his essential nature which he can in no way shake off. This has made his position in the phenomenal world unique and complicated and is the source of a good deal of perplexities in the determination of his course of development. He feels in his heart of hearts that he is not a slave of the forces and laws of the phenomenal world, but



that he has the inherent right to determine freely the course of his own self-development and self-enjoyment. He is inwardly conscious not only of the power to control his own affairs, but also to exercise at least some amount of control over the forces of external nature. His moral consciousness assures him that he is, if not wholly, at least partially the master of himself, and is himself responsible for his knowledge and ignorance, enjoyment and suffering, self-development and self-degradation. He feels that the circumstances in which he is situated, instead of compulsorily moving him on in any definite particular direction, keep open before him a large number of courses, any of which he has the liberty and power to adopt in accordance with his own choice.

Thus in one aspect of his nature he finds himself a creation of the world of phenomena governed by its laws and forces, and in another aspect he finds himself not only a free builder of his own destiny, but also to some extent a master of the forces and circumstances that constitute his environments. In one aspect he is of the world, but in another aspect the world partly belongs to him. The world, with its apparently bewildering diversities of phenomena, with the various kinds of conflicting and co-operating forces—physical, chemical, magnetic, electrical, biological, psychical, etc.—operating in it, with the universal and immutable laws governing their operations, supplies the self-conscious and self-determining man with the field of his free activities and materials for his self-exertion and self-fulfilment. He has the freedom of taking as much advantage as possible of his existence in this world and making the best possible use of the materials and circumstances offered to him by it, in order to satisfy the demands of his self,

to fulfil his chosen desires and aspirations, and to attain peace and happiness. The power of his intellect and will appears to be of a higher order and greater efficiency than the powers of external nature. With the development of his intellect and will, with the awakening of the powers latent in him and with the widening of the field of their manifestation, he learns to think of himself as a progressive conqueror of nature, with the right and capacity even to rebuild his world according to his own ideal.

Man is thus in the most paradoxical position in the universe. He is born in this phenomenal world as one of its innumerable species of creatures, subject to its laws and forces and having therefore no independence or power to have his own way, and at the same time he is the master of his self, free to determine the course of his activities and to build up his character and destiny, and even endowed with the power of conquering the forces of nature and exercising influence upon the courses of events in the world. The phenomena and forces of the world are found to be regulated by its own universal and inviolable laws, and in course of the process of its evolution it appears to give birth to man and to determine the nature of his existence and development in accordance with those all-governing laws; and at the same time those phenomena and forces are at least partially dominated by the power of the thought and will of man, and those immutable laws leave sufficient room for his free self-exertion, self-development, and self-fulfilment.

#### REASON'S SEARCH FOR A WAY OUT OF THE PARADOX

Feeling the apparent absurdity of this two-fold relation between himself and the phenomenal world and to get

rid of the perplexity of this paradoxical situation, man sometimes tried to shake off one of these aspects of his consciousness and experience as illusory. Sometimes he tried to regard the consciousness of freedom as deceptive arising out of the ignorance of his real relation to the world, and accordingly he attempted to surrender his individuality entirely to the forces and laws of nature. At other times he tried to ignore the existence of this world of necessity, and to regard himself as completely free from its determining influence. Both these attempts have necessarily been futile. These very attempts implied the reality of this paradoxical situation.

The human reason has in all ages employed itself to find out the underlying ground of this puzzling situation and to bring about a reconciliation between the consciousness of freedom in his internal nature and the experience of necessity in the external world. It has been in search of a consistent and comprehensive conception of this world of experience, in which man with his freedom of thought, feeling, and action may have a proper place and function. This search has moved the human reason from the lower and narrower planes of thought to the gradually higher and wider planes in order to get hold of some absolute Reality, in terms of which all his experiences, external as well as internal—the world of diversities governed by inviolable laws together with the domain of self-conscious and self-governing men within it—may be consistently and adequately accounted for. This *Sādhanā* of the human reason has found expression in philosophical speculations. At some stages of its development it has arrived at some solutions and expounded some doctrines; at other stages and from other standpoints they have been found to be inadequate and inconsistent; fresh attempts have

been made and new theories framed. In this way the philosophical *Sādhanā* of man has been moving onwards.

#### MAN'S ACTUAL SELF-EXERTION NOT WAITING FOR PHILOSOPHICAL SOLUTION

Whatever may be the ultimate explanation of the world and his relation to it, man must face the facts as they are and exert himself for the satisfaction of the demands of his nature. His life is a life of conflict and struggle. He is goaded on by the demands of his body and mind, finds materials for their satisfaction in the external world, moves forward to utilize them, and is sometimes helped and sometimes obstructed in his attempts by the forces of this world. Within himself also he experiences conflicts among the different kinds of demands in his nature. The powers latent in him are aroused by these conflicts and come out to overcome all kinds of resistance. He becomes more and more conscious of the powers inherent in him and of his right to fulfil himself in this world in spite of all kinds of difficulties and obstacles, within as well as outside himself. He gradually feels that he is born to lord it over all the circumstances, internal and external, that may stand in the way of his self-fulfilment.

#### MAN'S SĀDHANA AS A FREE SENSUOUS BEING

In the earlier stages of the development of man's thought and will, the demands of his sensuous nature are experienced to be predominant. His thought and will follow the impulses as they appear. His actions are then really governed by the forces of physical and psychical nature. But soon his reason realizes that these impulses and their demands are so very conflicting with one another, that all of them cannot be satisfied together. Nay, it is

realized that the fulfilment of the requirements of his sensuous nature as a whole demands the restraint and regulation of these impulses. Thus an inhibition of and judgment upon the impulses and desires and the choice of the best ones become necessary for the development of the sensuous nature itself and the enjoyment of the most intense and durable sensuous pleasure. Reason and will then exercise control over the impulses and seek out the best and most effective way for the happiness and perfection of the sensuous life. This is the prudent pursuit of Kâma.

When the human reason idealizes Kâma or the prudent satisfaction of the demands of sensuous nature and accepts it as the principal end of all human endeavours, it directs the powers of thought and will,—knowledge and action—mainly towards the realization of this end. It deliberates upon the best way to make the sensuous self great and happy, it tries to bring about a suitable adjustment between the self and the physical and social environments so as to achieve this object, and with that end in view it attempts to make a thorough and accurate study of the forces and phenomena with which human life is related and employs its own powers to control, regulate and utilize them to the best advantage of the sensuous life.

It is this urge of Kâma which has prompted the human reason to investigate into many natural forces and phenomena and to discover their causes and the laws governing them. Many notable scientific discoveries and inventions owe their origin to the systematic endeavours of the human reason for the fulfilment of the demands of man's sensuous life. The reason of man, by the proper regulation of the powers of his senses, thought, and will, has moved on and on for penetration into the

truths of nature, for conquest of its forces and modification of the courses of its events, in order that all of them may be in the service of his sensuous life. The freedom of thought, feeling and will has been exercised in the well-regulated and devoted worship of Kâma,—for the realization of the possibilities of man's sensuous nature.

All political and social organizations, all industrial and commercial adventures, all economic and financial speculations, all naval and military fortifications, and even many moral conventions and religious practices have, at this stage of the development of human reason, the aggrandizement of man's sensuous nature, and the fulfilment of man's sensuous demands as their primary end. They all offer worship to the god of Kâma.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF MANHOOD THROUGH THE WORSHIP OF KAMA

This devoted worship of Kâma, this systematic and organized effort of the human reason for making man great and happy by satisfying his sensuous needs, awakens considerably the powers inherent in him, widens and deepens his knowledge of the phenomena, the forces, and the laws of the world and the mind, and enables him to invent various instruments and materials for increasing the powers of his senses, body and mind, for fighting against the hostile powers and circumstances that offer resistance to the realization of his end and for bringing under control those that may be helpful for the achievement of his purpose. This development of the powers of thought, feeling, and will, in course of his pursuit of Kâma as the ideal, makes him gradually more and more conscious of the other aspects of his nature as well. His moral and religious consciousness also is awakened. He

learns to value the moral and spiritual resources of human nature. He finds that obedience to the dictates of his moral and spiritual nature is of great value for adding to the happiness, prosperity, and grandeur of the human society, and tries to utilize it for the realization of his chosen ideal. Thus even while engaged principally in the pursuit of Kāma, he pays some amount of attention to the building up of his moral and religious character. Accordingly, the cultivation of truthfulness and non-violence, justice and benevolence, temperance and self-restraint, respect for the life, property, and freedom of others, and reverence to and worship of God, becomes a part of the plan of his life. Morality and religion are of course given in practical life a position subordinate to that of Kāma—the fulfilment of the demands of sensuous life—which is pursued as the central regulative ideal of human Sādhana.

This is the guiding principle of the individual and social life of man in the lower stages of the development of human character, and this seems to be still the regulative principle underlying the present Western civilization. It glorifies man's sensuous nature, places man as the highest sensuous being on the throne of the universe, exploits all the material resources of the world and the intellectual, moral, and spiritual resources of man for serving man's sensuous needs. However magnificent the achievements of the modern Western nations within the past few centuries may have been in the glorification and aggrandizement of man and the conquest and exploitation of the forces and resources of the material world, it cannot be denied that the moving spirit has been the earnest devotion to and the adoring service of the sensuous aspect of human nature. From the

standpoint of the essential demands of the true self of man, this cannot be regarded as a high order of human civilization. For the true glorification of man as a moral and spiritual being, the central regulative principle of this civilization must be changed; the powers aroused in and acquired by man must be directed towards the realization of a higher spiritual ideal, and the society must be reconstructed on a truly moral and spiritual foundation.

#### AWAKENING OF MAN'S ESSENTIAL NATURE

As man becomes more and more deeply conscious of himself as an essentially rational, moral, æsthetic, and spiritual being,—as the rational, moral, æsthetic, and spiritual aspects of his nature develop and assert themselves,—he is gradually convinced that these elements of his nature do not exist merely or chiefly for contributing to the satisfaction of the demands of his sensuous self, that they have their own ideals to realize for which they have a legitimate right to demand the co-operation and even subordination of his sensuous nature. He becomes progressively conscious of the inherent supremacy of the rational, moral, æsthetic, and spiritual aspects in his nature. He feels that the gratification of the demands of his sensuous nature cannot give real and parmanent satisfaction to the essential demands of his life as a whole,—that he can never enjoy true peace and happiness within himself and attain a consciousness of self-fulfilment and absolute freedom from the sense of want and imperfection by the pursuit of Kāma. He realizes that he occupies a unique position in this world, not because he has a higher order of sensuousness and a greater capacity for sensuous enjoy-

ment than any other being, but because he has a rational, moral, æsthetic, and spiritual character, which has given him the right and power to rise above the domination of the sensuous demands and the natural propensities and to establish control over them, and which has endowed him with the competency to attain some supreme ideal, which is beyond the reach of any other creature within the universe of his experience.

At this higher stage of the awakening of the self-consciousness of man, the question arises in his reason as to what is the true ideal for the realization of which his essential nature has an inherent demand and till the realization of which the sense of imperfection and disquietude is sure to be present in his consciousness.

#### DEMAND FOR TRUTH

An insight into the inner urge of his rational nature makes him conscious that it has an inherent demand for Truth (*Satyam*). As a knowing and thinking being, man is urged from within to seek Truth for its own sake. At the lower planes of his consciousness he searched for Truth with a view to the advantage it offered to his sensuous nature. But now he feels that Truth itself has got its intrinsic value, and that from the standpoint of his rational character it is by itself of much higher value than what power, prosperity, and happiness it can bestow upon his sensuous self. He gradually realizes that it is his supreme duty to exercise his freedom and employ his powers of observation and thought for the attainment of Truth in the world of his external and internal experience, and that it is the attainment of the highest and most comprehensive Truth that can give ultimate satisfaction to his rational nature.

Here again he finds himself in a very perplexing situation. As a thinking and observing sensuous creature, he experiences bewildering diversities in the physical as well as in the mental world. He cannot but accept them as realities. They are the data conveyed by his senses to his reason. The preservation and development of all the aspects of his life depend upon these diversities. His very existence seems to be constituted of the diversities of physical and mental phenomena. But man's rational nature refuses to accept these diversities of actual experience as the ultimate truths. It is inwardly conscious that the senses—internal as well as external—do not give true information about the ultimate character of these apparently various kinds of phenomena. In spite of their actual presence before the senses, their true nature does not appear to be clear and distinct to reason. It employs itself to explain them—to make their true nature clear to itself—by means of deeper investigation and thought.

#### DEMAND FOR CAUSE AND DEMAND FOR UNITY

Thus to the human reason, knowing and seeing things *truly* does not consist in knowing and seeing them *as they appear to the senses*, but in being acquainted with the underlying *reality* of which they are the appearances. The search for this reality assumes chiefly two forms, which, however, are essentially related to each other. The human reason has the fundamental conviction that all the facts and objects of sensuous experience are of the nature of effects and that the true knowledge of these effects must consist in the knowledge of their causes. It is thus always on the look-out for the causes of all facts and objects of external and internal sense-experience, and when these

causes also are of the same nature with these facts and objects, it seeks for their causes also, and so on. Its demand is not satisfied and it finds no permanent rest, till it discovers and comes in direct touch with the ultimate and absolute cause of all phenomena of experience. To know the absolute and ultimate cause of the phenomenal universe is to know the absolute and ultimate Truth about it, for all the diverse orders of causally related phenomena of this universe are the self-manifestations of that Cause. That absolute and ultimate Cause must necessarily be above time and space, and therefore eternal and infinite, self-existent and all-pervading, for whatever is produced in time and occupies any portion of space must be of the nature

of an effect and must be traced to its cause to satisfy the demand of reason.

Reason has an equally inherent demand for unity. In its quest of Truth, it seeks for the unification of all its experiences. It inwardly feels that the diversities of experience are the appearances of unity. Whatever facts and objects of experience it fails to unify with the totality of its unified experience, it either regards as not truly known or abandons as false and illusory. In order to unify all orders of facts and objects, it moves upward to higher and higher principles of unity, and it cannot stop moving till it attains, the absolute principle of unity, in terms of which the entire phenomenal universe may be conceived as one organic whole.

*(To be continued)*

## SYNTHESIS AND HARMONY IN ANCIENT HINDU THOUGHT

BY SWAMI GHANANANDA

A religion may be indifferent or neutral to other religions, and yet when an opportunity presents itself, rise against them with all the bitterness of long-standing enmity. It may also live in peace and harmony with them, and even positively help them by promoting the fellowship of faiths without losing its own individuality. If any good feeling is to be created through the relationship between religions, they must not only cease to be indifferent or neutral, but also avoid all clashes and conflicts : they must not merely reconcile among themselves, but also establish a living harmony and synthesis in which each religion will find a place ministering to the spiritual needs of men. What country is most fitted to lead us in this great and noble task?

Students of history know that the voice of Asia has been the voice of religion. India has been the heart of Asia for centuries, strengthening, enriching and stimulating that voice. She has been the cradle-land of religion and philosophy. For scores of centuries in the past, this land of religious liberty and tolerance allowed her people to worship God in the way that suited them best. Spiritual thought and life grew and flourished in an unparalleled manner under such liberty. Numerous conceptions of the Divine and methods of worship as well as several systems of spiritual disciplines and schools of philosophy came into existence, culminating in the sublime heights of the Advaita (Non-dualism), from which all the various other systems and

schools could be viewed from a perspective not afforded by the non-Advaitic schools and systems, and from which all they could be judged rightly in their relationship to one another and to the supremest goal of all religion and philosophy, viz., the unity or non-duality beyond the Personal God and the individuality of the worshipper. From the lofty peak of the Advaita of which the latest discoveries of science seem like echoes, to the lowest ideas of idolatry and fetishism with their multifarious mythology, embracing the agnosticism of the Buddhists and atheism of the Jains, each and every system of religious thought in all its shades and all its depths, has a place in the eternal Religion of the Hindu. Aptly has it been likened to a mighty river that has shallows that a child may play in with safety and depths which the strongest diver may not dare to fathom.

When numerous ways and means of realizing the Divine came into vogue, it was but natural that they all claimed to be important. Thinkers and philosophers began to consider and critically examine them with a view to institute a comparison and arrive at their fundamental unity. Such an enquiry is as old as the *Vedas*; for as early as the days of the *Rig-Veda*, there arose a Rishi who found himself face to face with the conflict between the various Ishta Devatās (Chosen Ideals for worship) and the different methods of worship (Sādhanā), dived deep into the recesses of his own soul and discovered the great spiritual fact of the unity of all paths and creeds, expressed in the words, "Truth is One; sages call It variously".

Such a synthesis resulting in the harmony of the various conflicting creeds was the outcome, not merely of the spirit of enquiry that animated the ancient Aryan mind, but also of the

capacity for generalization that had its origin in a recognition and realization of unity. What made the ancient Aryans greater than any other people in the world was the blending of the gifts of bright intelligence and warm emotion with the gift of the gods—the gift of introspective intuition. It was this divine faculty that gave them the power to march sweeping past the masses of details and particulars and arrive at generalizations—to penetrate through the forest of facts and ideas to the sun that illumined them all and brought it to their vision.

Though they were not faced with a war of religions, as we know it today, the ancient Aryans were the true founders of comparative religion and philosophy. Centuries before the modern era, they compared the different systems of worship that arose in the country, like the worship of Indra, Mitra, Varuna, and other gods. They also compared the various doctrines, especially the doctrines of Karma (Action) and Jñāna (Meditation), the one enjoining on man the performance of rituals and ceremonials according to the Karma Kānda (Ritualistic portion) of the *Vedas*, the other preaching the life of peace and contemplation in the solitude of the Aranya (forest).

As a result of wide comparison, they discovered that religion and philosophy might be studied from one of the three standpoints, viz., the individual,<sup>1</sup> the eclectic<sup>2</sup>, and the synthetic.<sup>3</sup> According to the first of these standpoints, the votary of any religion or path believes only in his own religion or path, and disbelieves in that of another. This often leads to the individualism of the religious enthusiast whose faith is characterized by depth and intensity,

1. Siddhānta
2. Samuchchaya
3. Samanvaya.

but lacks in width and charity. In normal times, the narrowness and crudity of his conceptions of religions and sects other than his own may not become manifest. Most men may be said to be individualists. They study their own religion and practise it. They are honest and sincere. So far so good. But at times they become fiercely fanatical and blindly bigoted, because the strong convictions regarding their religions and sects being the only paths to salvation, and regarding other religions and sects as being heretical, inadequate, and unsuited, carry with them potential rupture and dissension which may break out at the slightest friction.

Secondly, there is the eclectic standpoint. The danger of narrowness is avoided in the eclectic view. The eclectic studies and appreciates the teachings of all religions, and is ready to accept the precepts of any religion that have a spiritual value. Nay, he is ready to garland them together like flowers of the garden for the benefit of humanity. He is far more broad-minded and generous than the individualist.

The eclectic, however, has to face a two-fold difficulty. The first difficulty is felt when he tries to choose a suitable spiritual discipline for his individual spiritual practice. He can seek it either under his own religion or sect, or under another. Though numerous systems of spiritual practices have been taught by the different religions of the world, his birth, traditions, and environments have produced in him certain impressions or innate spiritual tendencies (*Samskāras*), which naturally draw him to the disciplines of his own religion or sect. Through them his spiritual nature can grow more easily and develop more rapidly. To reject them and choose the practices of any other religion would mean spiritual stagnation and even spiritual suicide in most

cases. The way of thinking of the eclectic usually leads to a cheap cosmopolitanism which is devoid of strength and intensity. The eclectic realizes also a second difficulty: when he takes different elements from different religions that appeal to him and puts them together, excluding those elements that are not to his personal liking, he either forms or tends to form a new sect with a new scripture of his own making, thus adding to the already existing sects and scriptures of the world, and giving his sect and scripture the stamp of his own individuality. Such an anthology bringing out the valuable truths and teachings of many religions would be welcome in comparative study, but cannot take the place of a scripture proper. For every scripture contains specific methods of spiritual discipline and a definite system of philosophic thought in more or less developed form, and besides, derives its sanction from the spiritual realizations of some great Teacher or Prophet, which form the bed-rock upon which its authority rests.

Thirdly, we have the standpoint of synthesis or harmony of religions, which has supplanted eclecticism. It combines the ardour and intensity of the individualist with the depth and generosity of the eclectic. It affirms that all religions are true, they being paths to the same goal of God-consciousness. It recognizes that diversity is a law of nature, and that therefore various religions with various sects are bound to exist under the present conditions of humanity. Its aim is to see unity in this diversity, and not to effect uniformity through standardization.

All the three types of religions and philosophical outlook, the individualistic, eclectic, and synthetic, have been known in India from very ancient times. In the days of the *Rig-Veda* the devotees exclusively chose some *Devatâ* or



deity as his Ideal, and in this manner was worshipped Indra, Mitra, Varuna, or some other god. Some votaries worshipped one deity after another, looking upon each for the time being as the Supreme Deity, Omnipresent, Omnipotent, and Omniscient. This system of worship was characterized by Max Müller as Kathenotheism, 'that is a worship of one god after another', or Henotheism, 'the worship of single gods'. The worship that was prevalent was that of Brahman or the Supreme Spirit as manifested in some deity or other. Such worship was quite common among the Hindus and they perform it even today with an ease and freedom which comes to them out of their conviction that every Deity or chosen Ideal is a manifestation of Brahman.

It is a well-known fact that the Vaidikas followed either the ritualistic portion (Karma Kānda) of the *Vedas* or the Knowledge portion (Jñāna Kānda). After a time there were others who followed these paths conjointly and advocated the combination of ritualism with knowledge. Thus came into existence Jñāna-Karma-Samuchchaya (combination of knowledge with work). In a similar manner there also came into existence Jñāna-Bhakti-Samuchchaya (combination of knowledge with devotion), Bhakti-Karma-Samuchchaya (combination of devotion with action), and so on, according to the temperamental needs and spiritual necessities of men, such schools of thought becoming the bone of contention of later scholars and Sādhakas (aspirants).

It is one of the brightest and most refreshing features of the history of ancient Hindu thought that even as early as the days of the *Rig-Veda*, a Rishi proclaimed, "Truth is One, sages call It variously,—they call It Agni, Yama, Mātariśvan." Another Rishi

sang, "The wise Ones paint by words Him who is one with beautiful wings, in many ways". A seer praises the Hiranyagarbha in the following words, and asks: "In the beginning there arose Hiranyagarbha; He was the one born Lord of all this. He established the earth and this sky. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?" That Hiranyagarbha, the seer says, "is alone God above all gods", and herein we have an assertion of the unity of the Divine. Vedic seers like Yājñavalkya and Dirghatamas also preached the synthetic point of view and harmonized the various paths of worship and schools of thought.

The most outstanding personality who preached synthesis in the post-Vedic period was Sri Krishna, the Divine author of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. He appeared at a time when there was a terrible conflict in the Hindu fold—conflict between Karma (action), Jñāna (Knowledge), Bhakti (Devotion), and Yoga (Concentration), which form the main paths of spiritual disciplines (Sādhana Mārgas) of Hinduism, conflict between the duties of the various Varnas (Castes) and Āśramas (Divisions of life), and conflict between the rights and privileges of the higher and lower sections of society. He had therefore to face a religious and philosophical as well as a social conflict. His teachings as given out in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* form the most magnificent and most comprehensive synthesis of spiritual thought and life known to man in the whole range of religious literature. He harmonized all the paths and all the creeds. He harmonized all the conflicting systems of philosophy. He harmonized the duties of the Varnas and Āśramas. He also threw broadcast the treasures of spiritual thought and wisdom enshrined in the Vedic Religion to one and all, and removed the prohibition of the

study of the scriptures and practice of spiritual disciplines by women, Vaisyas and Sudras as well as "those of sinful birth", that evidently existed at his time.

Centuries after Sri Krishna, sectarianism asserted itself again, and the synthetic character of Hindu thought was almost forgotten in the days of the over-elaboration of ritualism of the three schools of Āgama, viz., the Saiva Āgama, the Sākta Āgama, and the Vaishnava Āgama, or the Pancharâtra, and the over-elaboration of the six famous systems of philosophy, viz., Nyāya and Vaisheshika, Sāṅkhya and Yoga, Purva Mīmāṃsa and Vedānta, which dealt with the Reality and interpreted the scriptures from different standpoints and in different ways. To this conflict between the various schools of Āgama with their respective chosen Ideals or Ishta Devatās and the conflict between the various systems of philosophy were added in the Sankarite and post-Sankarite periods the conflicts between the three well-known schools of Vedānta, viz., the Advaita, Visishtādvaita and Dvaita, expounding the truth in different ways. But out of the din and turmoil there slowly emerged in time the voice of peace through synthesis and harmony : for the various Ishta Devatās of the Tantras came to be looked upon as manifestations of the One Supreme Brahman; the six systems of philosophy were taken as studies of the One Reality from various points of view; and the three schools of the Vedānta were treated as differing approaches to God in His Personal and Impersonal aspects from differing perspectives. When Sri Rāmachandra asked Hanumân in what way he regarded Him and meditated on Him, Hanumân replied : "O Rama, at times I worship Thee as Purna, the One undivided. Then I look upon myself

as Amsa, a part, a fragment as it were of that Divinity. At other times I meditate upon Thee as my Divine Master, and think of myself as Thy servant only." The same genuine catholicity, arising from the synthetic outlook characterizes also the Siva Mahimna Stotra which says : "The *Vedas*, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Pāsupata, and Vaishnava creeds are each encouraged in one place or another. Some think that this or that is better owing to differences of taste, but all men reach unto Thee, the Supreme, as all rivers, straight or crooked, reach the sea". A well-known Hindu hymn says, "May Hari, the Ruler of the three worlds worshipped by the Saivites as Siva, the Vedāntins as Brahman, the Buddhists as the Buddha, the followers of Nyāya as the Chief Agent, the Jains as the Liberated, the Karma-Kāṇḍins as the Principle of Law, grant our prayers". As the *Prasthāna Bheda* of Madhusudan Saraswati puts it, "In reality, all the Munis who have put forward these theories agree in wishing the existence of the One Supreme Lord without a second. . . . These Munis cannot be in error, considering that they are omniscient, and these different views have only been propounded by them in order to keep off all nihilistic theories, and because they were afraid that human beings, with their inclinations towards the objects of the world, cannot be expected at once to know the true goal of man". (Quoted in Max Müller's "Six Systems".) It is no wonder, therefore, that at the conclusion of his morning and evening prayers, the Hindu boy utters : "All adoration leads to God, just as all water that descends from the heavens wends its way to the sea". Not only the higher scriptures of the Hindus, but even their popular folk-songs, express the self-

same sentiment of catholicity and harmony. Here is a South-Indian folk-song, rendered into English verse by Gover, which shows that the idea of unity in diversity has filtered down to the lowest strata of the race :

"Into the bosom of the one great sea

Flow streams that come from hills on every side,

Their names are various as the springs,  
And thus in every land do men bow down

To the great God, though known by many names".

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

### INAUGURATION AT BELUR

The inauguration of the celebrations which are to last for one year in connection with the Birthday Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna took place at Belur, the Headquarters of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, on Monday, February 24, and lasted till Sunday, March 1. Throughout the week there were huge crowds pouring in at Belur to be sanctified by the presence of the Master and the monks had a hard time all through the week in entertaining their guests. One is perplexed to account for this huge concourse. The answer is to be sought in the irresistible attraction and inspiring influence of the Master's life. It was a life which was lived best for oneself but which has nevertheless been lived entirely for others, a life of asceticism, unworldliness, all-embracing love and a burning passion to serve mankind. However private might have been his life, his thoughts today are irresistible. He stands for a great ideal. The quest of happiness in the external world has brought in endless complications in society. Life has become artificial and misery, envy and despair are today appalling. The life and teachings of the great saint has come like a soothing balm to this world scorched by this hatred and misery. He was nothing if not an embodiment of the scorn for gold and lust and love

for man. He has shown to the world that true happiness lies not in environment but with oneself. He has given the world a larger vision which reaches beyond the fleeting glory of this world by showing that the true destiny of man lies in attaining immortality through the realization of the divinity within him. No wonder then that his birthday, wherever celebrated, attracts such large crowds and is an occasion for a religious upheaval and great rejoicing.

The 24th of February was the actual Tithi of the birth of the Master. It was observed with elaborate worship and prayer and perpetual adoration was maintained before the sacred presence of the Master in the shrine of the monastery. An atmosphere of ecstasy prevailed and all felt a spiritual uplift for the time being. Devotees were seen talking in groups recounting the reminiscences of the Master, while others even in the midst of these festivities and rejoicings were seen wrapt in silent meditation and telling beads in the various shrines or retired corners of the extensive monastery grounds sanctified by the disciples of the great Master. The worship of the day was marked by an all-embracing spirit. Every manifestation of that one all-pervading Spirit, known by different names in different climes, was worshipped before the worship of the Master was begun, and Incarnations and prophets like Rama,

Krishna, Buddha, Christ, Mohammed, Sankara, Chaitanya and others were devoutly worshipped by the monks of the Order.

A unique feature of the celebration was the performance of a 'Homa' in a specially constructed altar on the riverside with the chanting of the sacred Mantras from the Vedas by Brâhmanas specially requisitioned from religious institutions of Benares. There was devotional music as also rendering of classical music. After the worship, there was distribution of Prasâd. About 8,000 devotees partook of the sacred offering.

In the afternoon there was also a public meeting in the monastery grounds. As the health of Swami Akhandananda, President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, did not allow him to preside over the meeting, his place was taken by Swami Suddhananda and the message of the President was read out in Bengali and English by two members of the Order. Many members of the Order and noted men of Calcutta addressed the audience. Their addresses proved to be brilliant expositions of the Master's ideals and message and were heard with wrapt attention by the audience.

Swami Nirvedananda addressing the audience said :

The celebrations of the birthday centenary of Sri Ramakrishna is bringing about a better understanding between different races, religions and civilizations all over the world. This birth centenary is being observed all over the world. What is the reason at the back of this? What was there in the Master's life that makes the world worship him today? There must have been something extraordinary in his life that has touched the inner cords of every man and woman of all races, nations and climes.

Sri Ramakrishna was born in a subject nation ; his parents were poor and he had no academic learning. He was an ordinary priest. But inspite of all these shortcomings,

he has given the world something invaluable for which the world today is prepared, to worship him as its redeemer. To realize God was the one aim of his life. Purity, self-sacrifice, love, humility, etc. were found in him to an extraordinary degree and these he has bequeathed to the world at large through his spiritual realizations. He has taught the world that God is One and that the different religions, nations and men and women have but described Him from different points of view and that this universe with all its diversity is but a manifestation of that One, Eternal Being. That is why sincere souls all over the world today have accepted him as the latest Incarnation of the Supreme Spirit.

Doctor Kalidas Nag observed :

Hundred years ago Sri Ramakrishna was not known to this world, nor was any temple built for him. On the opposite bank of the river Ganges, at Dakshineswar, this superman had manifested his real nature which baffles all description. Then no one imagined that that place, would become a pilgrimage hundred years later and that millions of men and women would come to worship him year after year. He lived the life and gave no discourses or lectures nor did he preach, but the life he lived has made him famous today.

Sj. Satyendra Nath Mazumdar addressing the audience said :

It is not possible to go into the details of the life of the one whose birth centenary we are here today to celebrate. He has repeatedly told us and shown to us by his life that the one aim of human existence is to realize God. But though he was absorbed in God-consciousness most of the time, he was not blind to the misery and sufferings of man. That is why he used to say, "Religion cannot be practised with an empty stomach."

This nation has lost sight of its ideal today, and is crippled by blindly adhering to certain dogmas and rituals which have no life in them. Sri Ramakrishna by his life has revitalized the religious life of the nation. He has hit hard on the hypocritical and lazy life that we have been leading, and has ushered in a new epoch in the life of the nation by establishing harmony and a better understanding between the different religions, castes, classes and races in the country.

The message of the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission and Swami Vivekananda on Sri Ramakrishna were broadcasted all over the world between 7-30 and 8-15 P.M. from the Calcutta broadcasting station. At night there was illumination of the monastery precincts and in the shrine there was an all-night worship of the Divine Mother Kālī at the close of which many novitiates of the Order were initiated into Brahmacharya and San-yāsa by the President of the Order.

#### PUBLIC MEETING AT THE TOWN HALL, CALCUTTA

A largely attended public meeting was held on Wednesday, the 26th February, in the evening, at the Town Hall under the presidency of Maharaja Sir Manmatha Nath Ray Chaudhury of Santosh.

Among those present were Swami Abhedananda, Justice Sir Manmatha Nath Mukherjee, Sir Hari Sankar Pal, Justice Dwarkanath Mitter, Dewan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, Mr. S. N. Mullick, Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, Prof. J. R. Bannerjee, Prof. Benoy Kumar Sircar, Swami Virajananda and Swami Suddhananda.

Paying his tribute Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee remarked :

In 'Bhakti', for which there is no exact English word and which can be approximately explained as fervent reverential love of the Supreme Spirit, he was unsurpassed. But he was not a mere 'Bhakta'. His spiritual knowledge and wisdom was marvellous. And what a teacher he was! By means of simple parables and homely illustrations, he could convey to even the most unlettered the deepest spiritual truths of 'most universal application. It was no common faith, no ordinary knowledge, no mediocre personality which could convert the sceptically inclined and keenly critical Narendranath into the unquestioning disciple Vivekananda and inspire him and others like him but less gifted than he to carry the Master's message and gospel all over India and abroad, and

carry out particularly his gospel of service.

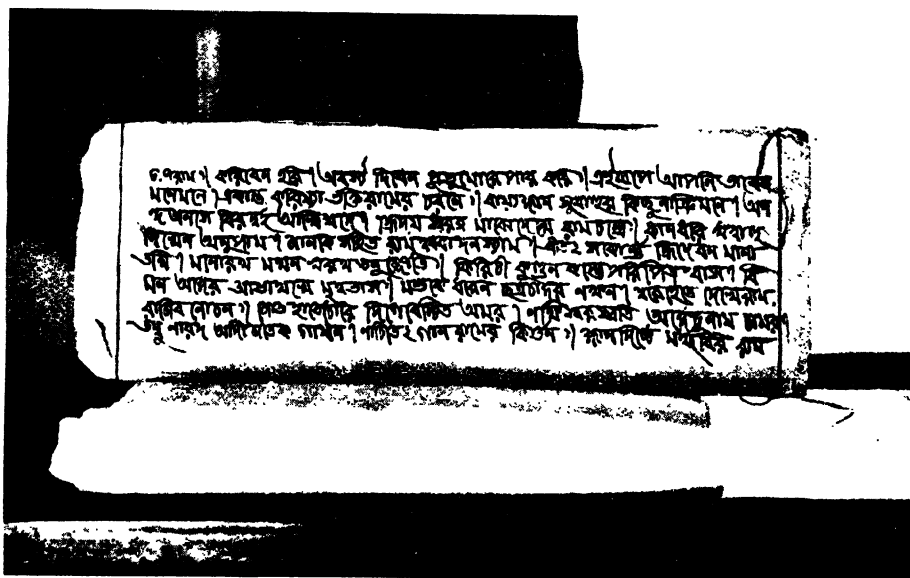
Considering that no school, no college, no university, no library contributed to his mental and spiritual equipment and that all that he owed to other human beings for such equipment was due to contact and conversations with some Sannyāsis and other religious-minded persons and the guidance of a 'Bhairavi' in the earlier stage of his preparation for his life's work, the conclusion becomes irresistible that his spiritual genius was extraordinary and marvellous.

What is known as religious tolerance or toleration but what would probably be better called mutual appreciation and respect among the followers of different faiths, has been traditional in India for ages. Within historical times Asoka set an example in this religious attitude for all ages and countries to follow. Other princely names, in medieval times, which one recalls in this connection are Akbar and Dara Shukoh. In modern times in India the earliest name which may be mentioned as that of a person who appreciated and assimilated all faiths which he had studied was that of Rammohun Roy. Keshub Chunder Sen, whose spiritual attitude towards all religions is well known, was a contemporary and loving friend of Ramakrishna. These names are mentioned not to minimise in the least the worth of the Paramahansa's message of appreciation and harmonization of all faiths and their assimilation in his spiritual constitution. My object is only to point out that the mental and spiritual attitude of which I am speaking has been in the atmosphere of India, as it were, from time immemorial and that the appearance of a great harmonizer in our midst is evolutionary—not sudden and revolutionary. That Ramakrishna was such a harmonizer in spite of his not having read the scriptures of even the principal historical religions in the original or in translation, gives him a distinct, a unique place in the long line of teachers of harmony of many a clime and age.

Whatever may be the case in other countries, in India the religious and the secular spheres of life were not considered and kept separate and distinct in times past. But if one has to speak of spiritual and secular achievements as distinct, it cannot be said that India has had through the ages only spiritual achievements to her credit: her children were noted, just like the inhabitants of other lands in former ages, for their secular achievements also. They had litera-



SRI RAMAKRISHNA



FACSIMILE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S HANDWRITING IN BENGALI FROM A MANUSCRIPT  
PRESERVED AT THE BELUR MONASTERY



A GATHERING OF LADIES AT THE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS, BELUR

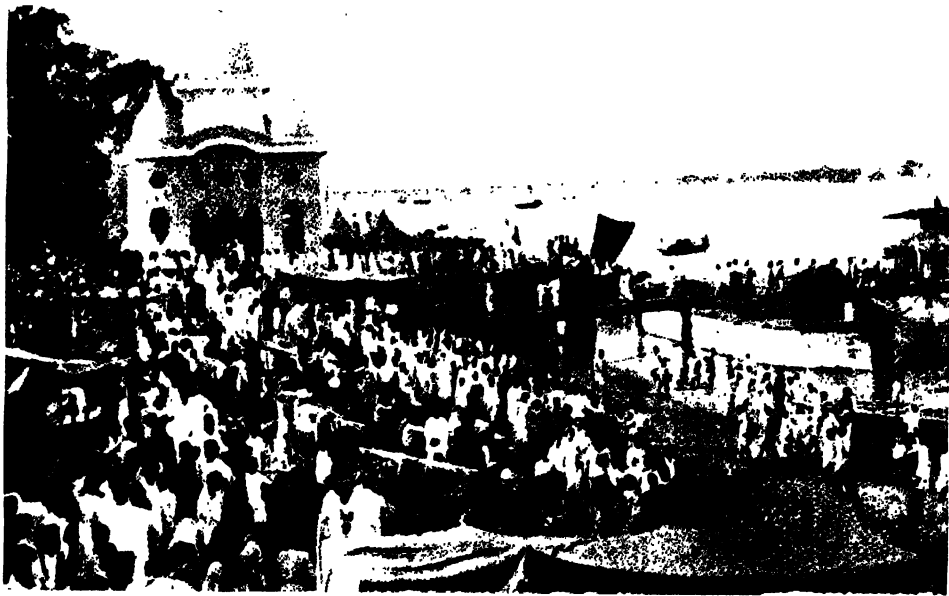


A RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE DURING THE WEEK, BELUR



KALIKIRTAN





DIFFERENT VIEWS OF THE LANDING GHATS, BELUR

tures and arts and crafts, philosophies, sciences, politics, empires at home and abroad, republics of various kinds, internal and overseas commerce, colonizing activities, adventures in distant oceans and cultural enterprise in far-off regions. But India's supreme note has always been spiritual. Keeping that fact in view, one may say that the Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Centenary is this year's most noteworthy contemporary event in India.

May the Supreme Spirit save us from lip-homage to the great saint, sage, teacher and inspirer!

Swami Abhedananda said in the course of his speech :

Sri Ramakrishna is the greatest man of modern India. He had come to establish the unity and harmony of religions. Five hundred years before Christ, Buddha was born. He preached Ahimsā and peace. After him came Christ in Palestine. Five hundred years after Christ came Mohammed in Arabia and after Mohammed came Sankara to establish once more the Sanātana Dharma in India. After another five hundred years came Rāmānuja, Chaitanya and Guru Nanak—all for one purpose, viz. to re-establish religion. Five hundred years had elapsed since Chaitanya was born and the time had come for another great soul to be born for putting religion once more on a firm basis and the Lord was born in the form of an illiterate priest. No other great soul till now has conquered in so short a time the hearts of men and women all over the world. He established the harmony of religions and preached the truth, "As many faiths so many paths", to mankind. Another great fact in his life was that he looked upon all women including his wife as the living representatives of the Divine Mother. He did not renounce wife and home like other great prophets of the past, but living in the world, he was, at the same time, the best of Sannyāsins. He has once more set woman on the altar of motherhood and had even accepted a woman as his Guru, to start with.

Dewan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar in the course of his speech said :

Though Bengal has every reason to be proud of the fact that the Paramahansa and his foremost disciple Vivekananda were born in Bengal, yet it should not forget that these great souls belong not

merely to Bengal, not even to India but to humanity itself. What is it that makes us venerate these as Godmen? What is the message which they gave to the world and which their disciples and those who follow their teachings are asked to broadcast to the world? Neither Paramahansa nor Swami Vivekananda tried to preach a new religion. They did not put forward a novel Hindu faith. In fact the eternal verities of the Hindu faith existed thousands of years back and were contained in its sacred books. It was true that commentators had tortured texts in a vain attempt to justify those excrescences which had grown round their ancestral faith and had tried to mar its beauty and hide its pristine purity. The message of Ramakrishna which his disciples so eloquently broadcasted in the West was the message of peace, of tolerance and of understanding. Sri Ramakrishna with none of the amenities of modern education vouchsafed to him was still great enough to understand the basic factors of all religions. He learnt the doctrines of the Islamic faith from Mullahs and the Christian faith from missionaries and he reiterated with emphasis the great truth that had been preached centuries ago by Hinduism and given expression to by the Lord Himself in His talks to Arjuna on the field of Kurukshetra. "Like the many rivers that ultimately flow into the same ocean, so by any faith sincerely practised, the good soul reaches the eternal." This is the great message of Ramakrishna. There is no need for conflict of creeds and of religions if this fact is understood and borne home in practical life. Basically and in essence, all faiths preach the same truth. '*Ekam sat viprā bahudā vadanti*'—"Truth is One, sages call it by different names." I am glad that one of the tangible results of the Centenary Celebrations will be the inauguration of a Cultural Institute where people of different faiths will try to understand one another and thereby enrich their knowledge of their own particular faith. That will prove a great blessing not merely in reconciling religious differences, but in making it possible for peace to prevail in the world. The great Swami Vivekananda has emphasized the Vedāntic truth that man whether born high or low, whatever his caste or creed, has the same divine spark in him. It is suggested sometimes by people who are unable to understand the fundamentals of the Hindu faith that Hinduism is not

a democratic religion. If this Vedāntic truth is properly appreciated, one will find that in Hinduism there can be no talk of 'I and my brother'. Hinduism is more than democratic, because according to it 'I and my neighbour are not only brothers but are identical. I am my neighbour!' If instead of merely believing in these statements or expressing them in fine language on platforms, each one of us apply in practical life this great truth, there is no problem, social or political in India which cannot find an early solution.

The President in his concluding speech spoke as follows :

"Sri Ramakrishna Centenary" is a name which has been given to a great national idea so that it may be hallowed by the lustre of the sacred memory of one who was verily the soul of the age he lived in. The idea is to inspire our people to fix their gaze upon the beacon-light of one of the greatest apostles of truth and spirituality who consecrated the Indian humanity and not only lightened its soul but thrilled it through and through with divine joy. The idea is to rouse our people from morbid stupor and take the fullest possible advantage of that flood-light which is capable of removing the veil of darkness from the obscurest corners of human knowledge. That idea, I take it, must denote in this scientific age not peaceful rest but motion which is the symbol of life as it is and as it should be today - motion in our thought and action in every out-look of life. The sublime idea of the past must remain sublime by rushing forth on sublime motion. The present is an epoch of expansion, the essence of which is movement of ideas, rushing forth with dynamic energy. Our world wide celebrations are meant to remove stagnations of every description and point towards a great whirlpool of action in which the East is to be epitomized, its total knowledge codified. Our celebrations should give a root-shock to those soldiers of fortune who have come to power by sheer accidents and talk of India, light-heartedly. Intoxicated by their sudden and abnormal rise by gross materialism, they forget that India is the home of the priest-people of humanity. They visualize India as a rickety child which has recently learnt to walk with the help of the leading string. Let me quote for their benefit what Thornton, in his history of the British Empire, has said of our ancient land: Ere

yet the Pyramids look down upon the valley of the Nile, when Greece and Italy—those cradles of European civilization nursed only the tenants of the wilderness, India was a seat of wealth and grandeur.

Professor Hearen in his historical researches writes: India is a source from which not only the rest of Asia but the whole of Western world derive knowledge and religion.

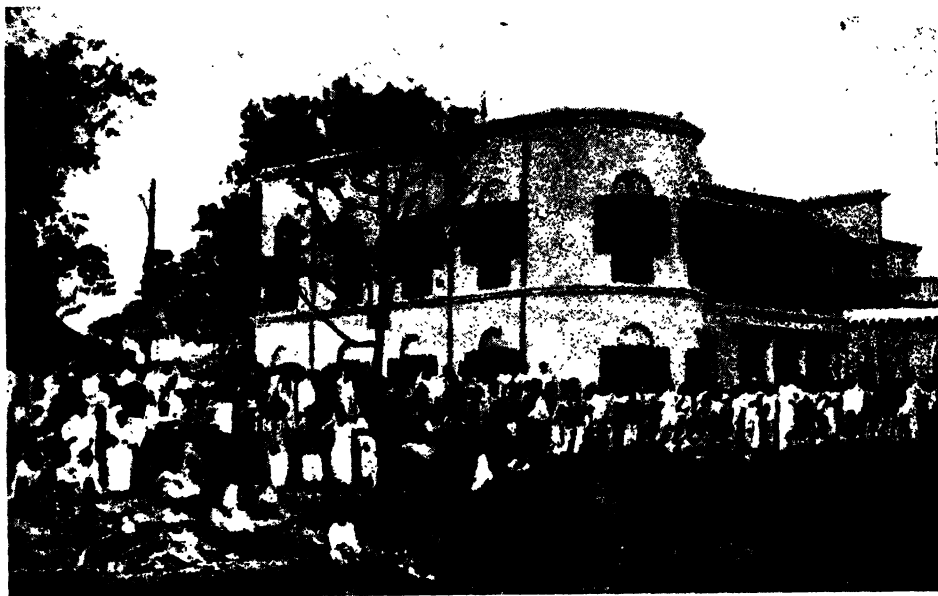
It may be that at times we have behaved like a self-forgotten nation, but we had and have enough vitality in us never to go to sleep for ever. Any way, these glorious remarks will give lie direct to such irresponsible utterances as are calculated to bring India and her peoples into contempt in lands far away from our great country, where ignorance of India's culture and civilization still reign supreme. I want those who take delight to make India their target to realize that the ancient Indians, free as they were from any social convention, or any religious prejudice, or political colouring, believed in perfect balance of human nature. They believed in a harmonious perfection, developing all sides of humanity and all parts of society. Compartmentalism is a narrow maxim of modern age, it is only a by-product of extreme form of nationalism. They had no rivals who could successfully oppose them and their world, though physically limited, had no space for expansion in imagination. Their social customs were dynamic, their religious thoughts were high and sublime, no tinge of narrow nationalism, far less provincialism or communalism were visible in their words and actions. In one word India first heralded to the sleeping humanity to awake and arise and serve their common Lord. I trust that the Sri Ramakrishna centenary celebrations will open the eyes of those who delight to cast aspersions on India's fair name to the real state of affairs. As an antidote for superiority complex, which is chiefly responsible for such aspersions, I should seriously ask them to assimilate into their everyday existence the noble lessons which the enthralling parables, noble teachings and soul captivating preachings of Sri Ramakrishna so eloquently inculcate. The reason why I believe in such an antidote is the deep reverence and the undiluted form of absolute faith which I have in the Saint of Dakshineswar. It is he, who like the miracle man of the twentieth century, shaped thinkers and organizers, that is men,



RUSH AT THE STAIRCASE LEADING TO THE CHAPEL, BELUR



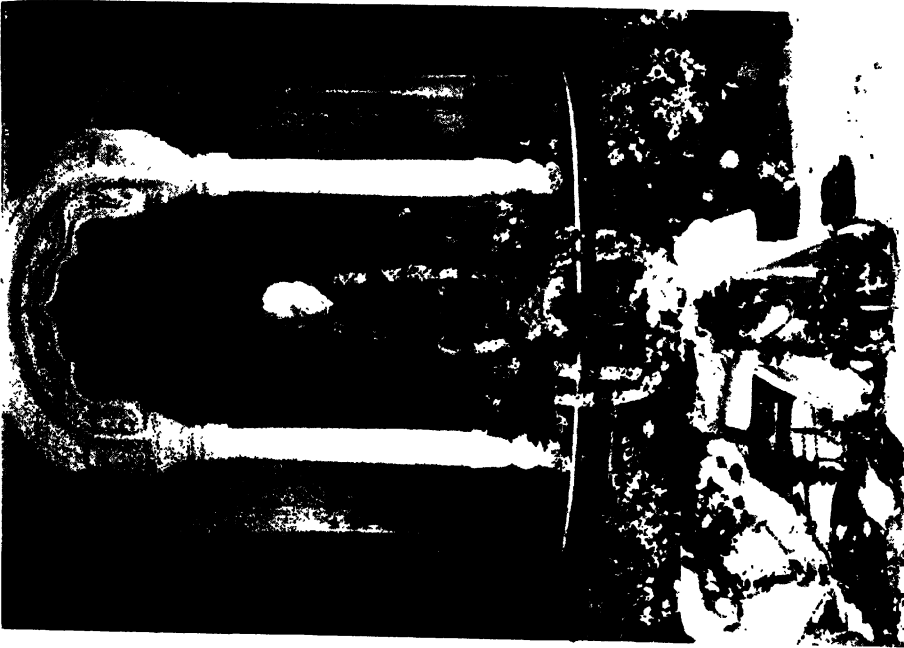
STAIRCASE LEADING TO THE CHAPEL, BELUR



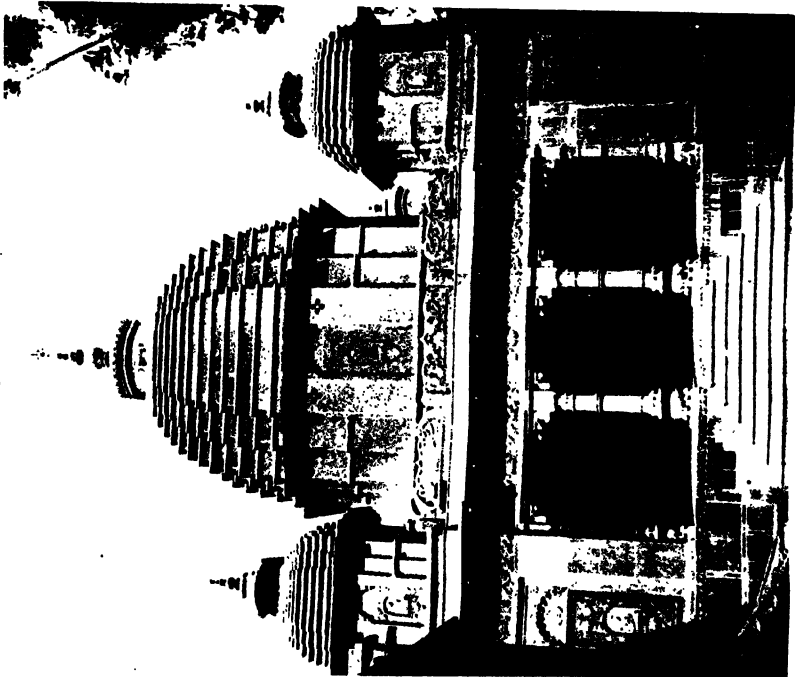
THE CROWD NEAR THE MAIN BUILDING OF THE MONASTERY, BELUR



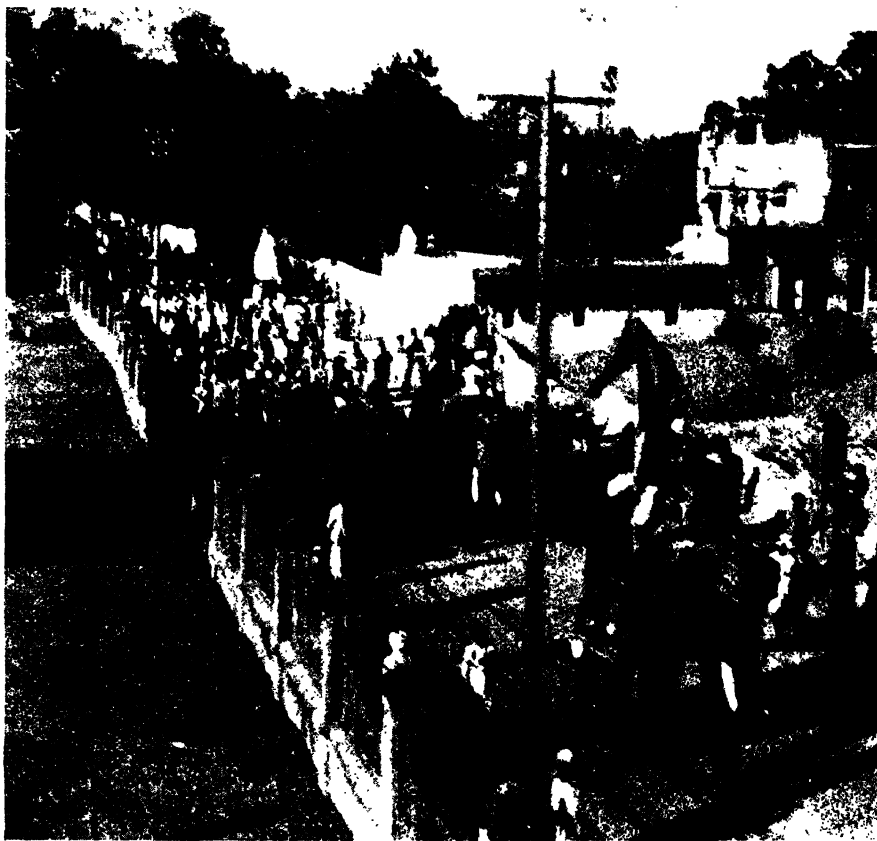
PILGRIMS PARTAKING OF THE SACRAMENTAL FOOD, BELUR



ALTAR INSIDE THE TEMPLE, BENARES



SRI RAMAKRISHNA TEMPLE, BENARES.  
OPENED ON THE 24TH OF FEBRUARY LAST  
BY SWAMI VIGNANANANDA



A PORTION OF A HUGE PROCESSION, CARRYING A PORTRAIT OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA  
ON AN ELEPHANT, ORGANIZED ON THE OCCASION OF THE CENTENARY  
CELEBRATIONS AT BENARES IN WHICH MONKS OF ALL  
DENOMINATIONS AND FAITHS JOINED FOR  
THE FIRST TIME IN A  
COMMON CAUSE

great in essence and fit to lead in their own sphere of action.

The greatness of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa consists in the fact that he lays the broad foundation of perfect understanding of the universal spirit in a materialistic and nationalistic age which is torn asunder by diversity of races and interests. It is he who preached from the lofty pinnacle of great knowledge that the sweetness and light of the few must be imperfect until the raw and unkindled masses of humanity are touched with sweetness and light. It is he who set aside the hitherto existing customs of all religions of the world to indoctrinate the masses with a set of ideas and judgments. He stands above all scruples, pitfalls, and shortcomings because, he conceived the long lost tenets of the Upanishads and taught the warring Nations to their utter astonishment the oneness of the universe and divine belief in perfection. In fact, he was not a Provincial preacher of religion, no dogmatism marred his tenets, no compartmentalism shortened his outlook—he was sublime and he could soar high and look upon the universe as one plane. It was this specially which made the name of Vivekananda almost a house-hold word in the States of America. It is this teaching which enables the Swami of our Belur Math to find listening ears in America and Europe. To the Prophet of Dakshineswar the whole world owes a symbol of Internationalism, a perfect figure of perfection and these are the new messages which are to be preached to the whole world.

Posterity, an enlightened and cultured posterity bordering upon perfection, will be too eager to have a thorough understanding of the personality of the sage of Dakshineswar who illuminated obscure and hitherto undiscovered regions of human intelligence and knowledge. I like to draw a portraiture of him before you as I take him, to be surely not as a saint whom the mankind will remember as a stern religious leader, disrupter of social organizations, but as a saint, full of sprightliness, humour, and handsome courtesy; a saint of kindly countenance and fascinating conversation with the magical power to beguile you into being informed beyond your worth and wise beyond your birth-right.

With the Poet, let me say—

“Constant as the northern star of whose true fixed and lasting equality.

There is no fellow in the firmament.”

With Mathew Arnold I may say:—

“The worth of what a man thinks about God and the objects of religion depends on what the man is; and what the man is, depends upon his having more or less reached the measure of a Perfect and Total man.”

It is Perfection, absolute in details which was worshipped by Sri Ramakrishna. His nature was dynamic. He was catholic in spirit, strong in organization and believed in a religion which is universal in nature. He made no distinction at all between his experiences in every day life and his experiences in dreams. That is why he looked upon dreams as realities. As a child of Nature, fired with imagination, he was carried on the high wings of fancy and he conceived in vividly fanciful colours of the impossibilities which are still lying beyond the ken to be focused. His spirituality thus became mixed up with Realities. His Masterpieces, the total growth and universal movements of his soul are incalculable. The world owes to him more than the world can pay. One hundred years constitute a pretty long span of time and although he shuffled off his mortal coil long, long ago, his spirit still resides with us.

#### THE PUBLIC CELEBRATION AT BELUR ON MARCH 1

The public celebration at Belur came off on the 1st of March. The monastery grounds and buildings were tastefully decorated with flags, evergreens, pictures and Durbar tents. Crowds began to pour in from Calcutta and the surrounding places using all sorts of conveyances and even on foot. There was special steamer service and even special local trains were running to bring people to the place. By noon the extensive grounds of the monastery presented a soul-stirring sight filled, as it were, by one seething mass of rejoicing people in which one could find all classes of people—Brâhmanas and low castes, the rich and the poor, Hindus, Mohammedans, Christians and Europeans mixed in a sweet democracy of the soul and it was rightly so, for in the retired gardens of Dakshineswar



the Master through his spiritual practices and realizations had brought about a social and religious cosmopolitanism in the country.

A bazar had transported itself from the city to the Math grounds and one could get all kinds of things—books, pictures, curios, refreshments, cool drinks, flowers, incense and other offerings for the shrine. The monastery in fact was converted into a village.

The crowd was thickest in the afternoon at about 4 P.M. when more than a lakh of people had congregated and it was an effort to move from one place to another even on the spacious grounds. The hugeness of the preparation for the entertainment of such vast numbers could easily be imagined than described and the monks on whom rested the whole responsibility were indefatigable in their eagerness to serve those who had come there as their guests. They had taken every precaution and were scattered all over the grounds sparing no pains for the comfort of the pilgrims and had even organized an ambulance corps to render first aid in case of mishaps. There was free distribution of cool drinks and tea in the afternoon by a devotee of Sri Ramakrishna.

Under a large Durbar tent in the

open fields a life-size portrait of the Master in Yoga posture, lost in Samādhi, was placed. It was tastefully decorated with flowers etc., and all day long Kirtan parties sang before it and crowds of people worshipped and prayed. On the open grounds of the monastery under tents the Kalikirtan party was pouring forth soul-stirring music creating an atmosphere of ecstasy. In other places also there were continuous chantings of the Lord's name.

After worship in the morning great quantities of food were offered to the Master which was later served to the visitors. Nearly twenty-five thousand had their full meal and many more had at least a small quantity of it. It was really inspiring to see the rush to receive even a morsel of this sacred offering for it was food offered to the Lord and as such had a spiritual influence upon him who took it. Such indeed was the faith of the people that had come there to pay their homage to the Master.

From 5 P.M. the crowd began to disperse and the function came to a close at about 8 P.M. after display of fire works. And as the last of the multitude left the grounds of the monastery, one could not but feel that one was standing on holy ground, nay in the very presence of the Lord.

## HAIL HARIJANS!

BY PROF. ERNEST P. HORRITZ

Aggressive nationalism is rampant and ruthless in 1936, the birth-centenary of our patron-saint, "le surpatriote Ramakrishna" whose universal mind re-echoes the infinite moods and emotions, not only of his native India, but of humanity. His thousand-voiced

organ-soul richly blended the world's discords and diversities in a sonorous unison of vision and viewpoint (Darsanam). The self-effaced world-teacher of Dakshineswar merged individual and national endeavour in cosmic breadth and all-embracing love, boundless a-

Mother Gangâ, after losing her name and form in the Sea of Bengal. Japan, Italy, and Germany need territorial expansion; predominance in the Pacific, the Mediterranean, the Baltic and, if possible, the Black Sea is the height of their ambition. But to antagonists of Kâmakâncanam like Ramakrishna a strip of land or a lump of gold has no more value than a handful of mud. Theirs is the discrimination (Viveka) between appearance and reality (Asat and Âtman) rather than between the rich and poor, the race-proud and abandoned, inaccessibles and untouchables, (Dwiija and Harijan). Self-realization (Âtmabodhi) had uplifted Ramakrishna to supernatural or international altitudes; his attitude toward all life was divine, since it was humane. This true cosmopolitan unwittingly helped to universalize nationalism which reasserts itself with irrepressible force on the political arena. The fires of nationalist insurgency have by no means burned themselves out.

About 1875 the national movement in India was started with the object of winning complete self-determination, and removing the humiliating stigma of foreign domination from the sacred mother-soil, once ruled by the proud Gupta dynasty. Hindu home life and society, law and literature, art and religion, are impregnated with Sanskrit culture which, in the opinion of Indian nationalists, is rapidly disintegrated by western influences. The political revolt against British coercion is merely an incident, overshadowed by the wider issue of a cultural conflict between East and West. An anglicized India means national dissolution and death!

Gokhale and Tilak, the early champions of the national cause, were Maratha Brahmins and learned Sanskritists. Both were rigidly orthodox and passionately polemic. Gokhale

condemned social abuses resulting from Varna or race-pride. Tilak who assumed national leadership in 1902 was not so much concerned with social reforms. He staunchly upheld the ancestral caste system, and was opposed to Christian missions, since they undermine Smriti or tradition. But fearless Tilak was far more than a political propagandist and agitator; deep and broad was his knowledge of national antiquities, based on sound Vedic research and astronomical computations. His scientific theory, far-reaching and compelling, that the homeland or nest of the Aryan race *must* have been the Arctis (Swetadwipa), and that the Indo-European exodus from the circumpolar zone commenced soon after the Interglacial Age, is still made light of by Hindu literalists, but eagerly taken up and elaborated by German pundits. Some years ago, a party of Brahmins voyaged to the Hyperborean nest (Swetadwipa) of the sweet Bhakta-bees. At the North Pole (Mount Meru) the pilgrims offered prayer and puja to the Aurora Borealis (Ushas). They greeted Vishnu-Nârâyana and the dawning of the Northern Light, and fervently chanted the radiant Aurora-hymn: "Thy light has come, of all the lights the fairest!" (Rig-Veda 1, 113). Tilak, like Plato, was intoxicated with the harmony of spheres and had an implicit trust in the eternity of Vedic rhythm. His religion or Dharma rested on Varna; he professed Varnâsrama Dharma like all Sanâtani Hindus.

Caste is a Dravid or pre-Aryan usage. The Vratyas, of Dravid origin, abhor intermarriage with aliens; mixed marriages are abominated as a race-taint, and are prohibited by law. Blood pollution and racial purification have hardened into Varna; as time went on, castes multiplied along occupational lines. Far back in the Rig-Vedic age

when the Hindus occupied N. W. India, Vrātyas dwelt and dominated east of them. Brahmins civilized and converted the Vrātyas, but at the same time adopted Dravid Varna which, with a Vedic veneer, developed into Varnāśrama Dharma, the rockbed of Hinduism. Magical incantations, a most popular feature of the Vrātya faith, were recast in Sanskrit spells and charms, known as the Atharva-Veda. Vrātyastoma, part of the Veda, is a historic repercussion of Vrātya conversions to Brāhmanism.

Gandhi on whom Tilak's mantle has fallen, identifies Western civilization, loathed by him, with economic exploitation and ever-growing armaments. That modern dragon-slayer or St. George, with his ardent passion for social justice, is bent on crushing the blood-sucking giant of capitalistic industrialism. Gandhi pleads and urges to have international disputes settled, not by a grim appeal to arms, but by a world-court of sane and impartial arbiters. Tilak's aggressive nationalism alienated the Moslems; Gandhi deftly espouses the cause of Islam for the purpose of wresting Purna Swaraj or full self-government from reluctant Britain. His special protégés are the untouchables; these age-long victims of pitiless Varna belong to God's household, he calls them Hari-jans. They have implicit faith in Gandhi, but utterly distrust the bulk of his orthodox supporters, that "satanic" brood; with a pariah pun on Sanātani. The "constitutional antipathy", felt by the well-bred and high-browed, and their cruel division between Dwija and Harijan, that is, high-caste and social outcast, saddens Gandhi, and touches him to the quick. He is ready to lay down his life, if necessary, for Indian unity. Gandhi defines totalitarianism as a free state based on justice; such a con-

ception is incompatible with race riots and mob-inciting speeches against caste desecration and blood defilement. On grounds of social justice Gandhi heroically defends non-co-operation and civil disobedience; jail or death cannot change a particle of the impregnable convictions of this Indian Socrates. The landed aristocracy, blindly submissive and blindly loyal to the British Raj, sides with the powerful Sanātanists whose all-India press, in vernaculars as well as the English tongue, scores and slashes Gandhi as an arch-enemy of true Hinduism. His quick repartee is that the materialistic commercialism of the declining West infects and slowly destroys the soul of India. Sanātanists retort sharply: "It's not the West, but you who work spiritual destruction on our Rishi-blest fatherland. You, the great Gandhi, won a cheap feather for your cap; you misled millions, but eternal Dharma can never die." Gandhi mildly: "Untouchability is a gross abuse of Manu's ancient laws." Sanātanists angrily: "You are a Hindu only in name, may be you are a Christian. Don't mention Manu, you detestable iconoclast! you dare deny that the Deity dwells in our holy temples; you shamelessly declare that Lord Krishna is no saviour or Avatār. You lightly reject Nārāyana, the personified "path of heroes", voyaging in the dawn of time from Swetadwipa to Āryavarta. You malign the glorious Mahā-Bhārata, as though our superb hero-sagas were a mass of mythological rubbish! You prefer unclean scavengers to holy Brahmins! You impudently rebuke India's slave-mentality, but are a miserable time-server yourself. You petty soul, call yourself big-souled, a Mahatma! You never tire of appealing to soul-force, but are utterly deficient in Sakti yourself. You discredit Dharma, the eternal law of soul-evolution, you

gigantic disillusioner of religious romance and the heroic life !”

Sanātani laws of spiritual unfoldment classify Hindu society into the four upper strata and a “Panchama” or fifth caste, viz. Gandhi’s beloved Harijans. Sanātanists uphold untouchability as a basic virtue found in every shade and grade of organic nature, even in the vegetable and mineral kingdoms. Well-groomed gardens must be constantly trimmed and weeded. Leaf-eating grubs and noxious insects have to be removed ; fungi and other parasites have to be torn out of the cultivated soil. There is ingrained poison in certain minerals, herbs and snakes. The same natural law holds good of certain individuals and sections of society. Sanātanists stretch the point so far as to assert “tribal venom”. Certain elements in every race and nation, they say, are poisonous and perilous ; they cannot be “touched” or approached without impunity. Sanātanists subtly argue that birth is no mere chance or accident, but a Karmic necessity in the unbreakable link of wanton cause and stern effect. Every thought, act, word leaves an indelible imprint on our subconsciousness ; these Samskāras or fine impressions, accumulated during lifetime, survive after death, in the Hindu belief, and involve Karmic obligations which no mortal can dodge. All of us have to discharge them to the last ounce and penny before we can possibly attain “complete salvation” (Purna Moksha). Therefore, Sanātanists reason, Harijans must not be touched ; they were born unclean on account of their depraved past lives. No secular legislation or external agency, such as Gandhi’s campaign, can turn them from their pre-ordained course, beset with thorns and nettles, sin and sorrow. Sanātanists cry shame on Gandhi, a

deist and mere humanitarian defies Sruti or revelation, and submits the gravest and greatest problems of existence to his arbitrary private judgment, is the bitter outcry of the eternalists to whom Varnāśrama Dharma is an infallible and incontestable authority. Gandhi, thus taken to task, offers apology for down-trodden Mother India : “Untouchability is a monstrous iniquity. India suffers agonies because of Varna, and is justly chastised.” Sanātanists : “No, untouchability is eternal Ritam, the immutable law of God, and is essential to Hinduism !” Gandhi : “Then let Hinduism perish on its sickbed ; the sooner the better !”

The Hindu mind is fundamentally conservative. Sanātanists are shrewd politicians, command a wide social influence and ample funds. Yet time and progress work against them ; they no longer swim with the popular current. Gandhi’s grip and hold on the masses, especially on Indian youth, remain unshaken ; selflessness and love of truth defy and defeat hardened Dharma or dogma in the end. Millions of young Hindus yearn for a religious reformation, free from superstitious extravagances and social outrages. Ever more the educated wage war against Varna, since caste fosters national discord and division. Modern India turns realistic and scientific, and feels in an ugly mood toward any form of petrified creed. Sanātani orthodoxy fades and decays. Gandhi’s Harijan campaign has almost severed nationalism from Hinduism. Of course, uncompromising Tories thunder and rage against the very suggestion of Indian home-rule which will “let in the jungle, and undo the uphill work of 150 years of English education.” Brahmin-intriguers, as the die-hards see them, will ultimately run and ruin a reactionary

has lost some of his prestige and power. But his cause is indefatigable. National socialism, if true to its name, is a force that can no more die than liberty herself! Gandhism, in some form or other, will resurge and triumph! Britain with her keen trading instinct and sane common sense, when confronted with the issue, as she must be sooner or later, will agree, ere it is too late, to an active or even "silent" partnership in her vast and valuable Eastern concern. Statesmanship follows economics which generally determines the political trail. Once the national-socialists and their industrial policy gain popular control, India will certainly not be dominated by the Brahminic hierarchy, despite all sinister predictions to the contrary. The breakdown of caste will unify rather than split the Hindu colossus, and restore race-consciousness

without the pitfalls of Varna. Moslems will enjoy full civic equalities, and Harijans will never be segregated in Pariah-pens or compounds, but be recognized as a vital part of the body social and politic. A few years ago, the writer of these lines attended in Ahmedabad a Harijan School, conducted by an altruistic Hindu lady with signal success. A new era dawns in Bengal, and sheds light over the whole Aryan East. "Master Eckart" came before Kant, the predecessor of Schiller and Goethe; the Upanishad sages culminated in Ramakrishna and Vivekananda who were forerunners of Tagore and his dynamic University. Seers and sages, modern Kālidāsas and Sankaras, arise. Sanskrit culture is witnessing a real renaissance such as the static priests, preachers and professors of yesterday never dreamt of.

## ATMABODHA

By SWAMI SIDDHATMANANDA

तावत् सत्यं जगद्भाति शुक्तिकारजतं यथा ।

यावन्न ज्ञायते ब्रह्म सर्वाधिष्ठानमद्वयम् ॥ ७ ॥

यावत् As long as सर्वाधिष्ठानम् all-supporting अद्वयम् non-dual (without a second) . ब्रह्म Brahman (the Supreme Reality) न not ज्ञायते is known तावत् so long जगत् world सत्यं भाति appears real यथा शुक्तिकारजतं as silver in mother of pearl.

7. As long as the all-supporting and non-dual Brahman is not known, so long the world appears real, even as silver appears real in mother of pearl (so long as the illusion lasts)

According to Vedānta, Brahman is the only existence and ultimate reality on which the world phenomenon is superimposed through ignorance. When Brahman is known the world vanishes, even as the snake vanishes when the rope is known or the silver when the mother of pearl is known. Vide *Vivekachudāmani*, verses 235—238.

उपादानेऽखिलाधारे जगन्ति परमेश्वरे ।

सर्गस्थितिलयान् यान्ति बुद्बुदानीव वारिणि ॥ ८ ॥

वारिणि बुद्बुदानीव As the bubbles (rise from, exist and dissolve) in water (तथा so) अखिलाधारे in the support of all उपादाने in the material cause परमेश्वरे in the Supreme Being जगन्ति the worlds सर्गस्थितिलयान् यान्ति arise from, exist and dissolve in.

8. Even as the bubbles (rise out of, exist and get dissolved) in water, so the worlds originate from, exist and get dissolved in the Supreme Brahman, the support and the material cause of everything.

"That out of which all these creatures are born, being born by which they live and having departed into which they enter, seek to know That. That is Brahman" (Taît. 8.1).

सच्चिदात्मन्यनुस्यूते नित्ये विष्णौ प्रकल्पिताः ।

व्यक्तयो विविधाः सर्वा हाटके कटकादिवत् ॥ ६ ॥

हाटके कटकादिवत् Even as bracelets etc. are imagined in the same gold सर्वाः all विविधाः various व्यक्तयः manifestations अनुस्यूते in the immanent सच्चिदात्मनि in the Atman which is existence and knowledge नित्ये eternal विष्णौ in the all-pervading प्रकल्पिताः imagined.

9. Even as bracelets etc are imagined in the same gold, similarly, all the different manifestations<sup>1</sup> (in this universe) are imagined in the all-pervading, eternal, and immanent Atman which is existence and knowledge.

<sup>1</sup> All the different . . . manifestations etc.—As manifested beings they are different but in their fundamental nature, as Brahman, they are identical. Brahman is the gold or substance out of which an infinite variety of ornaments are fashioned. As gold, they are all one, but form or manifestation differentiates them. So long as the form remains they are different, for form alone makes them what they are, a ring or a bracelet. "Just as, my dear, by a single clod of clay all that is made of clay becomes known,—all modification being only a name based upon words ; the truth being that all is clay" (Chh. 6.1.4).

यथाऽकाशो हृषीकेशो नानोपाधिगतो विभुः ।

तद्वेदाद्विभक्त्यद्वाति तन्नाशे केवलो भवेत् ॥ १० ॥

यथा आकाशः Even as space नानोपाधितो subject to various limiting adjuncts विभुः all-pervading हृषीकेशः the lord of the senses (the Atman) तद्वेदात् विभक्त्यद्वाति appears as divided owing to the limitations of the conditioning adjuncts तत् नाशे those (limiting adjuncts) being destroyed केवलः one without a second भवेत् becomes.

10. Like space, the all-pervading Lord of the senses being subject to various limiting adjuncts,<sup>1</sup> appears to be differentiated and when the adjuncts are destroyed, He shines as the one without a second.

<sup>1</sup> Limiting adjuncts—The limiting adjunct or Upâdhi is not an essential quality of any object. It means an apparent limitation of, or modification undergone by, an object which remains in reality unchanged, e.g., the redness of a colourless crystal due to the reflection of a red flower, or the limitation of space by a vessel. On removing the red flower the crystal remains colourless as before and on the destruction of the vessel, the space is found to be all-pervading as before. So Upâdhi is something extraneous and contrary to the nature of an object that is superimposed or imagined in the object. Due to the various limiting adjuncts which are the creations of Mâyâ or ignorance, the one indivisible Brahman appears to be many. But when ignorance is destroyed by knowledge and with it all these adjuncts, then the one Brahman alone, eternal and indivisible, is left.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

The Message by the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission is by Swami Akhandananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and the Head of the whole Organization. It was broadcasted all over the world by the Calcutta Broadcasting Station, on Monday the 24th of February, the birth centenary day of the Master on which day the centenary celebrations were inaugurated at Belur, the Headquarters of the Organization. . . . We have attempted to show how *Unity in Humanity* can be effected by promoting a better understanding among the different peoples of the world through cultural relations. . . . Prof. Akshaya Kumar Banerjee points out the essential elements in *The Hindu Ideal of Human Civilization*. . . . Swami Ghanananda is a member of the Ramakrishna Order. In his article he points out how the synthesis of thought has been achieved by India from age to age. . . . *Sri Ramakrishna Birth Centenary Celebrations* gives a detailed report of the inauguration of the centenary celebrations at Belur, the Headquarters of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission and the Calcutta Town Hall meeting held in this connection on Wednesday the 26th of February by the Calcutta public. The celebrations lasted for one week, from February 24 to March 1. . . . Prof. Horowitz in *Hail Harijans* drives home the idea that breaking of castes will unify than split up the Indian nation.

### "MANUFACTURING OF HARIJANS IN ASSAM"

The public are very grateful to Mr. A. V. Thakkar for his revealing note of the above caption in the November

21, 1935 issue of *The Servant of India*. Here he draws the attention of the Government and patriotic Indians to the none too realistic picture of the "Tea garden cooly castes" in the language of the last Census Superintendent of Assam, Mr. C. S. Mullan.

Their name is Legion. Some are castes recognized in their provinces of origin as definite Hindu castes; others would be considered Hindu castes merely by courtesy, while such others as the Mundas and Santhals cannot be said to be castes at all, but aboriginal tribal communities. Coolies in Assam form, however, a separate class of the population, no matter what castes or tribes they belong to. . . . It is because of this that in Assam a "coolie" is always a "coolie", and whether he works on a garden, or whether he has left the garden and settled down as an ordinary agriculturist, his social position is nil. From the point of view of Assamese society, a person belonging to any coolie caste or tribe is a complete outsider, and is as "exterior" (or depressed) as any of the indigenous castes I have classed as exterior.

The same report informs us that "they are educationally terribly backward, they have no recognized leader or associations to press their claims or to work for their social advancement; they are foreigners to the country."

Mr. Thakkar has not described how they live or rather are suffered to live, probably because it is too painful to do so. But the real question is: Who are responsible for this degradation of human beings? The writer of the note has likened them to "squeezed lemons". Nothing can be a truer description than

this. Year in and year out, this has been going on, not in Africa or Fiji, but on the Indian soil and under the nose of the Indian Government. Who reap the benefit of this human degradation? It is the Tea Companies and the Assam Government, none of whom think it a part of their duty to do anything for them except dubbing them "exteriors" and allowing them to die in sin and squalor. These people, we are told, form "a little over 20 per cent." of the population of the Brahmaputra valley. These 14 lakhs of human beings are being dehumanized because their clever brothers took advantage of their poverty and simplicity to leave them hopelessly in a worst economic and moral condition.

Mr. Thakkar's suggestion of taxing the tea industry for creating a Special Welfare Department for the uplift of these people should attract serious attention of our M. L. C.'s and the Assam Government. This is the least part of their duty. Any outside interference even in the shape of mere help to these unfortunates will surely be resented by interested parties unless it has the backing of the Assam Government.

#### REABSORPTION OF CRIMINALS INTO SOCIETY

"I know that penal institutions can be run without great buildings, without guards and guns, without locks and bars, for I have several times visited such a prison in Australia, within fifty miles of Melbourne. . . . I know that 'incurrigibles' can be so treated as to be brought back into society, to desire to stay, entirely without bars and guns, because I know of such a place in Russia, within fifty miles of Moscow." --says Mr. Sydney Strong in the October 21, 1935 issue of the *Unity*. He is dissatisfied with the best arrangements of the U. S. A. Government.

Perhaps Russia and Australia too are not satisfied with theirs. This is not so from an idealist's point of view but from a matter-of-fact realist's. This reabsorption of criminals into society is a problem that demands immediate solution but which refuses to be solved, Christ and Christians, Buddha and Buddhists notwithstanding.

Psychiatrists have revealed us the fact that some are born criminals, that they have an innate tendency for criminality which is very difficult to suppress. Opportunities and repeated acts take possession of their entire personality and do not leave a bit of will to resist. It is rather easy to suppress the tendency when found out in an early stage of development. This is the duty of all school authorities. A good number of psycho-analysts as teachers in every school is a necessity the importance of which cannot be overrated. But that is prevention and no cure. The real problem is with the confirmed criminals. They are almost "incurrigibles". It requires the creation of highly exceptional circumstances to correct such "incurrigibles". Ordinary society is afraid of their anti-social habits and is rather compelled to keep them under some sort of watch; this restraint again is resented by the criminals and goes to harden them still.

To save ordinary society from danger and to give the criminals the maximum of freedom for healthy growth, the only wise method is to create a separate colony for them with facilities for honest life and for moral and intellectual improvements. Here also the presence of a body of expert psycho-analysts is a necessity. Life must be made easy and attractive for them. Healthy recreations and amusements must be made free. Those of their relatives who want to live with them either temporarily or permanently should be



allowed to do so. They, in conjunction with the psycho-analysts, should be allowed to police and administer themselves. All duties and responsibilities of improving their colony must be entrusted to them. This opportunity of commencing life anew is itself a great step towards self-improvement. The dignity and responsibilities of a new life adds a zeal and freshness to it and removes all morbidity.

But this cannot be achieved without a sufficient flow of money. Both government and philanthropists should vie with one another in spending money for the regeneration of lost human beings, for what can be a better utilization of money than this? But this is not a purely philanthropic work; it is paying too, though not immediately, for the country gets so many working, zealous hands in place of pests and blackmailers.

### INDIA AND PASSIVE RESISTANCE

We have a brilliant article from the pen of Sir Hari Singh Gour, "Passive Resistance—Old and New", in the last November issue of *The Calcutta Review*. It is a trenchant criticism of the entire Hindu culture. We understand from what depth of his heart and with what end in view he has written the article. We have all praise for the heart. But there is a chance of his being misunderstood by the ever alert enemies of Hinduism or rather the Indo-Aryan culture.

The writer compares the Indian and Hellenic cultures thus: "Life to him (the Indian) is an evil and it has no reason to be pampered with material well-being. Herein lay the vital contrast between the Eastern and the Hellenic ideals of life. . . . To the one life being an evil it was of no concern; its early dissolution was all to the good. To the Greek, life was a blessing and

meant to be enjoyed." Here both the premise and the implied conclusion are false. The so-called philosophy of enjoyment of the Greek did not save him from Roman thralldom and the subsequent degradation continuing even to this day, Nor is it a fact that the Hindu never enjoyed life and built flourishing empires. If we are to judge a nation by the amount of enjoyments, then, we are sorry to say, history is against Sir Hari Singh. Grecian history affords a very sad picture of enjoyment when compared to Indian history. Who of the Greeks built empires? Alexander was a solitary exception. When did the Greeks develop the idea of a nation? Are we to learn it from the City States?

Next he sings hallelujah to Islam. We have no objection to one's singing provided it is not to our cost. But it is so here. Says he, "We have on the one hand the whole of the Asiatic continent before the rise of Islam and its history under its sway. Islam is a religion which embodies the spirit of the Arab nomad. It is the militant aggressive force which made the Mongolian horsemen fierce warriors and implacable foes." Mongolian horsemen needed no Arab spirit to make them "fierce warriors and implacable foes". It was they, be it remembered, who drove the Turks to Europe from their native home in northern Asia and taught an unforgettable lesson to Mohammed, the Shah of Khawarism, the then most powerful Mohammedan King of Asia. And it was these Turks who formed the bulwark of Islam. The Arab nomad is still a nomad. With a meteoric existence the Arab glory passed away handing over the imperial and cultural bequest to non-Arabs. Central and North Asian tribes never show in borrowed feathers. This fire, original fire, the Indo-Aryans too had. But they were

then hibernating after millenniums of glorious history. Asia's conquest was the conquest by the Mongols, the Turks, the Persians, and the Pathans, i.e. by the Mongols and the Aryans; the Semites had very little hand in it. So the much vaunted spirit is not Arabic, whatever else it might be.

We know the futility of always adverting to past glories. We are advocates of future glory. But the past should not be unnecessarily attacked. There is no harm of getting inspiration from the past, if inspiration can be had therefrom. Sir Hari Singh is impatient because he has failed to take notice of the changes in religion, philosophy, and society that Hindu India has witnessed from age to age. We are not to forget the Rajputs, the Sikhs, the Marhattas. We are not to forget Sri Krishna, Guru Govind, Rāmadās, Dayanand, and host of others with the self-same mission. India's spirit knows how and when to change.

Aggressive militant spirit is not the only criterion of the greatness of culture; though it must be admitted it is a very important criterion. That is the truly great culture which knows how to bend as well as to strike. Had India's culture been based on force alone she would have followed in the footsteps of all the ancient imperialist nations, of most of whom, but for the zeal of research scholars, we would have no informations. Every reader of Indian history, however, has this painful revelation that the country suffered grievously because of the annihilation of the Kshatriya power. But why has it been so? Because of the Kuru-kshetra war, of Buddhism, Jainism, and Vaishnavism, the three predominantly quietistic religions. Hinduism or rather the Sanātana Dharma has always a glorious place for the Kshatrā Sakti.

## CASTE AND UNTOUCHABILITY

Sir Govindrao addressed an open letter to M. Gandhi about caste and untouchability, to which the latter replied in the columns of *Harijan*. Mr. N. C. Kelkar, as he was one of those whom the writer of the letter appealed to for giving a lead, expressed his opinion on the matter very clearly on the November 24, 1935 issue of *The Mahratta*. Mr. Natarajan too has expressed his on the 23rd November issue of his paper.

There is not much of difference in the views expressed in these papers. Whatever little is, is only of degrees, Sri Govindrao standing, it might be said, for haste, to which Mr. Natarajan's remark, "More haste, less speed", is the fit answer. Sir G. D. Madgavkar has stressed interdining and intermarriage rather too much. Here again Natarajan's views seem to us to be most rational. Says he, "Dining among Indians is regarded as a private and personal necessity of no importance as a means of promoting social intercourse. . . . But we are not sure it will be any good making intermarriages a plank in the national platform. . . . To make out that a man or woman who marries out of the customary group, does more to advance the national interests than another who is content to choose a partner in his or her own class, is to look at the question from a wrong perspective. There is no demerit attaching to intermarriages, nor is there any special merit either." As regards intermarriage Mr. Kelkar seems to have begun it in his family from the right end by first of all doing away with the sub-castes.

Untouchability, as a permanent stigma on a section of humanity, has not the shadow of a sanction either of reason and heart or of scriptures. It had its origin in the unclean habits,

physical and moral, of the tribes. When they are removed by proper education, their effect will die out spontaneously. It is said that the moment these people turn Christians, they are recognized as touchables. But it is a superficial remark. Those who have noticed the change of living in these people will attribute the change of attitude of the caste people to it rather than to their change of faith. Those untouchables who turn Arya Samâjists develop clean habits, though not to the same degree as the Christian converts. Let the superficial critics help the depressed classes in developing good habits while remaining in the fold of their forbears, let them grow economically and educationally, and the problem will solve itself without any difficulty.

Why, again, drag so mercilessly the poor, halting caste system of the present Hindu society? It is slowly dying out wherever there is culture and education. It hides itself in remote villages where the people lack education and have no idea of their own scriptures as well as of how the world is going on. Bring in light here and the much abused caste system is gone. But what about the new castes that are being formed before our eyes—the “educated caste”, the “rich caste”? The rich and the educated are forming exclusive castes, they do not mix with the poor and the uneducated. Which one is better—the old or the new system?

The thing is, India will always have caste distinctions. Cultural similarity will break old distinctions no doubt. But then new ones will rise, unless we

deliberately suppress slow natural absorption and instal in its place revolution and fanaticism, and unless we prevent the rising of new religious sects or social groups, which in course of time form castes. Take for instance the European residents in India. They have their own society, they love their Christ as we our Krishna or Chaitanya, they do not intermarry or even inter-dine with the natives; but many of them, the more cultured of them, love Indian art, Vedânta, and many other things. And longer residence will deepen love, sympathy, and respect for the children of the soil and differences will vanish automatically. They will then form a caste as exclusive as any other of our times. With a further lapse of time this exclusiveness too will go and the absorption will be complete. This is what has happened with the Sakas and the Huns. In this process there is no hurry-scurry, no pang of separation from dear ones as in individual conversion or social compulsion. As regards the absorption of new social and religious groups, however protestant and abusive at the beginning, everyone who has eyes to see can see the process merrily going on in the present society. This is the true Indian process—there is no tyranny, nor even persuasion. India reveals herself and gives absolute freedom to all groups; and in so doing she absorbs all. But perhaps “absorb” is not the true word; she makes them all her own, she wins them by love. And this winning process is the true caste system, whose aberration is the existing one.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**THE VEDANTA KESARI.** *Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Issue.* Edited by Swamis Amriteswarananda and Tapasyananda. Published by Swami Hrishikeshananda from Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. Price Re. 1.

This centenary issue brought out as an offering to the reading public on the memorable occasion of the birth centenary of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa contains about 120 pages of thoughtful articles on Sri Ramakrishna and his message and mission written by eminent men of the East and the West. The issue begins with an English rendering of the invocation to Sri Ramakrishna by Girish Chandra Ghosh followed by an inspired writing of Swami Vivekananda on the glory of the spiritual realization of the Master. Among the writers there are: M. Romain Rolland, Sir P. S. Siwaswami Aiyer, Dr. Mahendranath Sircar, Prof. P. N. Srinivasachariar, K. S. Venkataramani, Prof. James B. Pratt, Sister Devamata, Prof. Ernest P. Horowitz, Mr. H. S. L. Polak, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi, Mr. Dhangopal Mukherjee and others. The issue can be conveniently divided into three distinct divisions, the first giving the life, message and the philosophy of Sri Ramakrishna, the second containing short life sketches of the disciples of the Saint, both Samnyāsins and householders. Mention can be made of Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi's pen sketch of the Holy Mother wherein she has given a somewhat detailed account of the life, personality and teachings of the Mother depicting her as an embodiment of the highest ideals of Indian womanhood. The third gives in detail the growth and expansion of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement at home and abroad.

The issue is well illustrated and the printing and get-up very good.

**LIFE BEYOND DEATH.** By MRINAL KANTI GHOSH, Published by S. K. Ghosh, 2 Ananda Chatterji Lane, Calcutta. Pp. 418. Price Inland Rs. 5, Foreign Sh. 10 nett.

The Ghosh family of Amrita Bazar, Bengal, which is well known for its early services to the cause of independent journalism in India, has also been a pioneer in the introduction and cultivation of spiritualism in this country shortly after it had

been presented before the American public by the Fox sisters in 1864. The present book "has grown out of records of seances held in the Ghosh family circle and of other spiritual manifestations which occurred during a period of seventy years". It was first published in Bengali. The generous welcome which it received from the public encouraged the author to bring out a translation in English and another in Hindi with improvements.

In the first part of the book we have records of a large number of seances, spirit manifestations, clairvoyant visions of departed souls and talks with spirits, etc. which have been attested by a large number of witnesses, some among whom are very well-known figures in public. The second part treats of certain theories and facts in the light of spiritualism such as rebirth, causes of manifestations of evil spirits, treatment of obsession cases and the like. While we are not inclined to doubt the intrusions of the dwellers of the spirit world into this world of matter, we are afraid that the author has not made a wholly successful attempt in trying to prove that the popular idea about reincarnation is mistaken, that rebirth in the usually accepted sense is not contemplated in the Hindu scriptures, and that it was taken into Hinduism from Buddhistic sources. Such researches are best left to experts. The doctrine of transmigration is so clearly accepted in the pre-Buddhistic Vedic literature that to maintain a contrary doctrine is almost a hopeless task. Apart from this the book will enhance the cause of spiritualism.

**THE ESSENTIALS OF ADVAITISM.** By Prof. Ras-Vihari Das, M.A., Ph.D. *The Punjab Sanskrit Book Depot, Saidmitha, Lahore.* Pp. 146.

An attempt has been made in this book to provide students of philosophy with an account of Advaita Vedānta in English from an original source, viz. Sureswara's *Naishkarmya-Siddhi*. As an immediate disciple of Sankarāchārya, the reputation of Sureswara as an authority on Advaita philosophy as propounded by the Achārya, stands very high. The book under review is however neither a literal translation of the original Sanskrit work nor an independent version

of it. It is "a running account of the book, sometimes elaborating and sometimes abbreviating what is actually said in the text." It has however been claimed that the meaning of the author has been faithfully followed and only what would be necessary and sufficient too for students of philosophy to understand Sureswara's arguments has been considered.

In the first chapter the efficacy of religious actions has been discussed in detail. Unselfish and religious actions have been given this much credit that they purify the mind and thus produce a state favourable for the rise of knowledge. But by no action whether of mind, body or speech can a man attain *freedom from bondage* (Moksha) which can only be attained by the knowledge of the Self (Ātma-Jñāna). In the second chapter the nature of the Self has been discussed. In the third chapter the meaning of the Vedic declaration, "Thou art That" or "I am the Absolute" has been considered at great length. In the fourth and the concluding chapter, a summary of the teachings of the preceding three chapters has been given supporting the same by quotations of some passages of Sankarāchārya. At the end there is a discussion about the conduct of an enlightened person: "When knowledge cancels ignorance with all its effects there remains nothing else to be done." But it is not to be feared that the truly enlightened person becomes like a stock or stone or that he is likely to perform unrighteous actions. When a man takes fright on seeing (through mistake) a snake in the place of a rope, he continues to tremble even when his mistake is corrected. So also, a man who has obtained true knowledge will continue to perform certain righteous actions—not as a means to some end—but they will follow without effort from the nature of the sage.

The presentation is lucid and the attempt, praiseworthy.

**YOUNG INDIA, 1927-28.** By Mahatma Gandhi. S. Ganesan, Publisher, Triplicane, Madras, S. E. Pp. 1104. Price Rs. 4.

The publisher deserves our thanks for having brought out this beautiful Khaddar-bound volume containing Gandhiji's treatment of many and various problems, not only in the political, social, and economic affairs of the nation, but in the lives of individuals as well, in so far as they have been referred to him. It also preserves much contemporary history which, but for this publica-

tion would have lain buried in the volumes of a weekly periodical. The admirers of Gandhiji will find this a very valuable publication.

**CHRIST IN THE INDIAN CHURCH.** By A. J. Appasamy. *Christian Literature Society for India, Madras.* Pp. 172.

This book is intended to be a primer of Christian faith and practice. The author seems to have read the *Gītā*, and in Chapter III on "Jesus Christ, The need for an Incarnation" the Hindu doctrine of Avatāra has been discussed. But Jesus Christ is the *only* Avatāra (see Page 45). "In India the claim is frequently made that Jesus is only one among many Incarnations. The devout Christian is never able to understand this claim. To put Jesus on a level with Rāma, Krishna or Buddha is impossible." But a devout follower of Rāma or Krishna, though never swerving by a jot or tittle in his devotions towards his Ishta (Chosen Ideal) can accept Jesus Christ as an Incarnation of God. And that is the difference between a religion based on eternal principles and one based on a personality.

**THE QUESTION BOX.** By Rev. Bertrand L. Conway of the Paulist Fathers, New York. Indian Edition by Rev. Paul Dent of the Jesuit Fathers, Calcutta. *Macmillan & Co., Ltd., Calcutta.* Pp. 263. Price 12 annas.

It contains clever answers to many and various questions about the Catholic Church. It is interesting to find such sentiments in the book as following:—

"All men will be saved in all religions who sincerely endeavour to the best of their ability to (1) Know what God, the Maker and Master of man and the Loving Father requires of them and to (2) live up to the best knowledge they can acquire in the matter and to (3) repent of and forswear and forsake out of sincere sorrow at least their more serious shortcomings in numbers one and two above." [*Italics ours.*]

"(4) Those who fulfill these three conditions and are not Catholics will—with difficulty—be saved . . . etc." [*Italics ours.*]

We do not however appreciate the dabbings in the doctrines of Karma and Moksha which the author does not seem to have understood.

**PROPHET MUHAMMAD.** By Maulana Yakub Hasan. G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. Pp. 133. Price 12 annas.

A brief sketch of the life and teachings of the Prophet has been presented in a straightforward manner. "This is how an average intelligent Mussalman in touch with the main currents of modern human thought sees his Prophet and would wish others to see him." An honest endeavour.

**MOTHER INDIA.** By Anilbaran Roy. *Gita Prachara Karyalaya, 108/11, Manoharpukur Road, Kalighat, Calcutta.* Pp. 48.

The brochure contains two essays on (1) Mother India and (2) The Spiritual Heritage of India.

**RAMA NAMAM.** (A three-act playlet from the Great Hindu Epic "Rāmāyana". By Mudda Viswanadham. *Vyasa Kulceram, Melupaka, Yellamunchilli. Dt. Vizag : S. India.* Pp. 15.

It depicts the devotion of Hanumân to Rāma and his name.

**THE NEW EVOLUTION.** By Narayana Kausika alias N. G. Venkata Narayana Ayer, B.A., L.T. Pp. 171. Price Re. 1-8.

The author says in a covering letter: "I have just printed this book with the sole idea, at present, of sending copies of it to some of the great people of the world, hoping that if they have as much faith in the Truth and in the Higher Life as I, a man in the street, profess in the pages of the book, they would unreservedly take up the cause . . . etc." The book is full of words of wisdom, words and nothing but words.

**ANCIENT VERSUS MODERN "SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM" OR THEOSOPHY AND CAPITALISM, FASCISM, COMMUNISM.** By Bhagavan Das, D. Litt. *Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras.* Pp. 209. Price Re. 1 8.

As its title indicates, this is an interesting study of Capitalism, Fascism, and Communism in the light of Theosophy. It is good that Manu Maharaj and other Indian sages and law-givers of old have been frequently referred to and copiously quoted. We agree with the author that he has ventured to make certain "suggestions, possibly foolish, possibly useful, certainly well-meant!"

### SANSKRIT

**SĀṆKHYAKĀRIKĀ · OF · I S V A R A KRISHNA.** Edited and translated by S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri. *University of Madras,*

*Madras.* Pp. xxviii + 132. Price Rs. 2 or 4s. only.

The book gives the text in Devanāgarī and Roman characters, its translation in English and fairly exhaustive notes, both critical and illuminating. The Introduction, without pretending to be scholarly is informative and explicative. The editor's view, that the Sāṅkhya is an intellectual quest for the Vedic intuitive vision rather than a reaction against it, has our best support, and we are sorry to note that the point has not been pressed further. But perhaps the last word on this topic could not be said unless the Shashti-tantra was discovered. Still all the Paurāṇic references to the Sāṅkhya give their weight to the Editor's hypothesis, and the Kārikā itself does not go against it. The discussion on the priority of the Māthara Vṛitti to the commentary of Gaudapāda, however, cannot be said to have been closed. The editor would have done well to show more cogent reasons for his doubt regarding the identity of the two (?) Gaudapādas of Sāṅkhyakārikā Bhāṣhya and Māndukya-Kārikā. It is due to these reasons that Mr. Sastri has paid rather scant attention to this Bhāṣhya, otherwise he would have got another supporter to his hypothesis.

The editor has followed the authors of Sāṅkhya-taru-vasantah and Sāṅkhya-tattva-kaumudi in his interpretation and translation of the Kārikā; and from this point of view his labour has been eminently successful. The translation is good; and the notes have made many, almost all, intricate points abundantly clear. The footnotes, besides showing the scholarship of the editor, will prove a great help to the readers in getting some very valuable informations about the Sāṅkhya philosophy. The book will, no doubt, be hailed by scholars as well as by laymen interested in Indian philosophy. The University is to be congratulated on the publication.

**VEDĀNTA-DINDIMAH.** By Sri Nrisimha Sarasvati. Edited with a Sanskrit commentary by Y. Subrahmanya Sarma. *The Adhyatma Prakasha Office, 65, Second Road, Chamarajapet, Bangalore City.* Pp. 80. Price 8 annas, Foreign 1s. Postage Extra.

The book is a good primer of the Vedānta philosophy, in some respects it is better than the Vedānta-sara. The editor's commentary, brief though it is, is very helpful in understanding the author's laconic verses.

**THE MAHABHARATA** (Southern Recension). Vol xi and xii. Edited by P. P. S. Sastri, B.A. (Oxon.), M.A. V. Ramaswamy Sastrulu & Sons, 292, Esplanade, Madras. Pp. 749 and 466+110+129 respectively.

These two nicely printed and finely got up volumes of the Mahābhārata have fully kept up the high standard of the editorial efficiency of the preceding volumes which have been reviewed in the pages of this magazine. The "Scheme of Adhyāyas" given in the Introduction to Vol. XI is an interesting addition which will be appreciated by the readers.

**PRAPANCHA-SĀRA-TANTRAM.** Pts. I & II. Edited by Arthur Avalon, Sanskrit Press Depository, 27/1, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta. Pp. 73+16+596+24.

Arthur Avalon has done an inestimable service to the right understanding and propagation of the Tantra literature, so much so that no English-reading scholar or Sādhaka can possibly do without consulting his opinion. Tradition ascribes the authorship of the present book to Sankarāchārya and its Tikā to the great philosopher's dear disciple Padmapādāchārya; and the learned editor has not found any cause to differ from the tradition. Over and above Mr. Avalon's careful editing, the present volumes have also passed through the hands of the veteran Tāntric scholar and Sādhaka, Achalānanda Sarasvati. The correctness of the text is almost assured. But the most interesting portions of the book are the illuminating notes and digressions of the writer of the English introduction, which, besides many other things, gives a good summary of the whole book. The whole Tāntric world has sustained an irreparable loss at the death of such a learned editor. The two volumes will, no doubt, be hailed by all interested in the Tantra literature.

**THE BHAGAVAD-GITA WITH THE TEXT IN DEVANAGRI AND AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION.** By Annie Besant. Messrs. G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. Price 4 annas only.

The tenth edition of the book speaks of its worth.

**FROM YERVADA MANDIR.** By M. K. Gandhi. Translated from original Gujarati

into English by Sr. Valji Desai. *Jivanji D. Desai, Navajivan Karyalaya, 1759, Gandhi Road, Ahmedabad.* Pp. 96. Price 2 annas only.

We are glad to see the second edition of the book so soon. It is good that India and the world are earnestly hearing the true living representative of ancient Indian culture. We had occasion to review in the pages of this magazine its first edition. Nothing has been added or subtracted from it in this edition.

### BENGALI

**UDBODHAN:** *Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Number.* Edited by Swamis Suddhananda and Sundarananda, *Published by Swami Atmabodhananda from 1, Mukherjee Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.* Price Re. 1.

This special number of the journal contains about 300 pages of reading matter. It is brought out in commemoration of the birth centenary of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa which came off on the 24th of February last. The issue contains an appreciation of Sri Ramakrishna's life by his illustrious disciple Swami Vivekananda. There are several articles of great interest from the pen of notable writers of Bengal interpreting the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna from different standpoints. Some of the writers are: Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, Swami Suddhananda, S. Jaladhar Sen, Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar, M.M. Pandit Pramathanath Tarkabhushan, S. Motilal Roy, S. Ramananda Chatterjee, Prof. Ramesh Chandra Majumdar and Dr. Kalidas Nag. There are also articles of cultural interest by S. Asit Kumar Haldar, S. Beni Madhav Barua, S. Kshitimohan Sen Sastri, Prof. Dhurjati Prasad Mukherjee, Prof. Amulya Charan Vidyabhushan, Prof. Priyaranjan Sen, M.M. Vidhusekhar Sastri and others. The issue contains also an article on the Disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, which gives short accounts of the lives of the important Sannyāsins, householder and lady disciples and devotees of the Master. The issue is profusely illustrated and exquisitely printed and in every way suited to the occasion. Compared with the matter and get-up of the issue, the price is very moderate.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### SRIMATHI KAMALA NEHRU

The passing away of Srimathi Kamala Nehru has come like a shock to the country. Though she was ailing for a long time, yet it was not expected that the end would come so suddenly. Born in a rich family and bred up in comfort and luxury she did not hesitate to renounce all and stand by her husband in his fight for freedom as a true comrade. How great her love for India was could be imagined from her entreaties to her husband even when she was on her death-bed requesting him to return to India as the motherland needed his services more than she. May her soul rest in peace.

To Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru and the Nehru family we convey our heartfelt condolences in this great affliction that has befallen them. May the Lord grant them strength to bear it.

### SIR JOHN WOODROFFE

We deeply mourn the loss of Sir John Woodroffe who passed away in January last. He will ever occupy a most prominent place among the few foreigners who have felt the throb of the real Indian culture and who have by their life-long labours forced the minds of both the East and the West to the recognition and appreciation of the Indian wisdom. In expounding the great Tantrik literature he joined to the keen acumen of a lawyer and the critical impartiality of a judge a deep sympathy which opens the gate to understanding. His unremitting labours spread over more than a quarter of a century have made him the greatest authority on the subject in the West. They have made the literature of the Tantra popular and have removed the general misconceptions about it. He was more than a lover of the Tantra. His appreciation extended also to other aspects of the richly varied Indian culture. No foreigner, or for that matter no Indian after Vivekananda, has drawn more pointed attention of the Indian *mānasaputrās* of the West to the necessity of abiding by the precious heritage of India before she can cast off her inertia and rise in all her glory. He has left India under a debt which she can hardly repay.

### THE RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA ASHRAMA AND THE VIVEKANANDA INSTITUTION, HOWRAH, BENGAL

Though not directly affiliated to the Ramakrishna Mission, these twin institutions were born under the inspiration of the two saints whose names they bear, and are run by men whose connection with the Mission is very intimate. They are model institutions, each of its own type, which are sure to convince every visitor of their unique worth and efficiency. They show what a little band of self-sacrificing youths can do for the country, if only they are rooted to religion and morality.

The latter institution is an off-shoot of the former and forms, quite fittingly, one of its chief activities, if not the main. It is an H. E. School with a splendid numerical strength of 680 students and an efficient staff of 23 teachers; and its University Examination results are quite commensurate with the love and labour bestowed by its teaching staff. Its physical culture activities, Saturday literary classes, Recitation of hymns from the Vedas and the Upanishads, the friendly relation between the teachers and the taught, and a suffusing spiritual atmosphere are worth noticing. The institution has added health and buoyancy of spirit to most of its students.

The Ashrama is the centre of inspiration of the above activities as well as of many others. Here the true workers live a life of silent devotion and service, and imbibe the culture of the land, which is diffused in the neighbourhood through their activities. Some of its activities are: the daily worship of Sri Ramakrishna, the more important Hindu Pujās, celebrations of birthdays of saints and prophets of the world, holding of scriptural classes, running of a Library and Reading Room, a free Night School (very efficiently managed), a Homœopathic Charitable Dispensary, a Bhāndār for helping "the helpless and deserving people with rice, clothes, blankets, and money", and the above mentioned Vivekananda Institution with its grand arrangements for physical culture including scouting. The authorities are thinking of opening a vocational department, if necessary funds are forthcoming.



We wish every national worker should visit the institutions with open eyes.

## VEDANTA SOCIETY, PROVIDENCE

### RHODE ISLAND

#### REPORT FOR 1934-35

Swami Akhilananda with his friends, Annapurna, Bhakti, and Frances, returned from India on December 23, 1934 landing in New York. Swami Bodhananda of New York, Swami Vividishananda of Washington and a few friends met the party at the pier. Swami was very happy to have received messages of welcome already in Cherbourg and on the boat. Many friends received the party at the Providence railroad station and gave them light refreshments when they arrived at the home of the Vedanta Society where a Christmas tree had been decorated to welcome them. The following day Swami conducted the Christmas Eve service speaking on the Incarnation of Christ. Swami Vividishananda spoke on the Significance of Christmas. The next Sunday Swami spoke on the Message of Christ, and thereafter resumed the regular activities of the season.

Services were conducted every Sunday, and classes on Tuesdays and Fridays. Tuesday classes are devoted to scriptural studies and often to series of lectures on different phases of Practical Psychology. These last are found very constructive and helpful as many pseudo-psychologists have created much confusion in American minds. Friday classes are devoted to the practice of meditation followed by study of the scriptures.

This year Swami was invited by many prominent clubs and churches in the city and in the state to speak on India as well as on different phases of Hinduism. He attended regularly once a month the meetings of the Universal Club of Brown University, an association of ministers of Rhode Island, where he lectured and joined in discussions. He was also asked this year to join the discussions of the Union Ministers meeting.

In August 1935 the Swami was invited by the Williamstown Institute of Human

Relations, which is to establish better understanding amongst the Jews, Catholics, and Protestants. Many priests, ministers, rabbis, and distinguished professors from all over the United States attended. The Swami was invited to speak once and joined in the discussions many times. He gave as the basis of better understanding the Vedantic doctrine of the oneness of life; and showed that the dynamic power of love based on the recognition and acceptance of different religious approaches would be the real cementing element.

Swami's lectures over the radio, WPRO, were so much appreciated that he is still asked to continue them every week which he has been doing through this year. At intervals of one and a half to two months he also conducts the morning service over station WJAR, where he alternates with ministers.

While Swami was absent in India, friends carried on the work here by reading on the usual lecture evenings. After Swami's return and the Christmas festivities, the birthdays of Holy Mother and of Swami Brahmanandaji were celebrated with worship and dinners. A new thing was done on Swami Vivekananda's birthday. After the dinner following the worship, the students were asked to say a few words from their impressions of Swami Vivekananda. Sri Ramakrishna's birthday was a big celebration. Swami Akhilananda spoke after the dinner, as also Reverend Wilmot, Dr. Claxton, and others. Good Friday was marked by the usual three-hour service around mid-day which people like very much. At Easter the Chapel was bright with flowers given by many friends. The season closed with a week of festivities on the arrival of Swami Gnaneshwarananda of Chicago and of Swami Vividishananda. There was a big dinner with Swami Paramananda and his friends from Boston also present. On successive nights the Swami lectured, and Swami Gnaneshwarananda showed his moving pictures of India which were much appreciated.

# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

## SWAMI VIVEKANANDA IN OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

(From, 'The Oakland Tribune')

March 8, 1900

### HINDOO TELLS OF HIS FAITH

*Anxious to Find How to Stop  
Going to Heaven*

Swami Vivekananda delivered a lecture last evening on the subject, “The Laws of Life and Death”. The Swami said :

“How to get rid of this birth and death—not how to go to heaven, but how one can stop going to heaven—this is the object of the search of the Hindoo.”

The Swami went on to say that nothing stands isolated—everything is a part of the never-ending procession of cause and effect. If there are higher beings than man, they also must obey the laws. Life can only spring from life, thought from thought, matter from matter. A

universe cannot be created out of matter. It has existed for ever. If human beings came into the world fresh from the hands of nature they would come without impressions; but we do not come in that way, which shows that we are not created afresh. If human souls are created out of nothing, what is to prevent them from going back into nothing? If we are to live all the time in the future, we must have lived all the time in the past.

It is the belief of the Hindoo that the soul is neither mind nor body. What is it which remains stable—which can say ‘I am I’? Not the body, for it is always changing; and not the mind, which changes more rapidly than the body, which never has the same thoughts for even a few minutes. There must be an identity which does not change—something which is to man what the banks are to the river—the banks which do not

change and without whose immobility we would not be conscious of the constantly moving stream. Behind the body, behind the mind, there must be something, viz., the soul, which unifies the man. Mind is merely the fine instrument through which the soul—the master—acts on the body. In India we say a man has given up his body while you say a man gives up his ghost. The Hindoos believe that a man is a soul and has a body, while Western people believe he is a body and possesses a soul.

Death overtakes everything which is complex. The soul is a single element, not composed of anything else, and therefore it cannot die. By its very nature the soul must be immortal. Body, mind, and soul turn upon the wheel of law—none can escape. No more can we transcend the law than can the stars, than can the sun—it is all a universe of law. The law of Karma is that every action must be followed sooner or later by an effect. The Egyptian seed which was taken from the hand of a mummy after 5000 years and sprang to life when planted is the type of the never-ending influence of human acts. Action can never die without producing action. Now, if our acts can only produce their appropriate effects on this plane of existence, it follows that we must all come back to round out the circle of causes and effects. This is the doctrine of reincarnation. We are the slaves of law, the slaves of conduct, the slaves of thirst, the slaves of desire, the slaves of a thousand things. Only by escaping from life can we escape from slavery to freedom. God is the only one who is free. God and freedom are one and the same.

This evening the Swami, whose audience last night was large and attentive, will lecture on "The Reality and The Shadow".

March 9, 1900

## REALITY AND THE SHADOW

### *Hindoo Philosopher Delivers Another Interesting Lecture*

Swami Vivekananda, the Hindoo philosopher, delivered another lecture in Wendt Hall last evening. His subject was : "The Reality and The Shadow". He said :

"The soul of man is ever striving after certainty, to find something that does not change. It is never satisfied. Wealth, the gratification of ambition or of appetite are all changeable. Once these are attained man is not content. Religion is the science which teaches us whence to satisfy this longing after the unchangeable. Behind all the local colors and derivations they teach the same thing : that there is reality only in the soul of man.

"The philosophy of Vedântism teaches that there are two worlds, the external or sensory, and the internal or subjective—the thought world.

"It posits three fundamental concepts—time, space, and causation. From these is constituted Mâyâ, the essential groundwork of human thought, not the product of thought. This same conclusion was arrived at a later date by the great German philosopher Kant.

"My reality, that of nature and of God is the same, the difference is in form of manifestation. The differentiation is caused by Mâyâ. As the contour of the shore may shape the ocean into bay, strait or inlet; but when this shaping force or Mâyâ is removed the separate form disappears, the differentiation ceases, all is ocean again."

The Swami spoke of the roots of the theory of evolution to be found in the Vedântist philosophy.

"All modern religions start with the idea," continued the speaker, "that

man was once pure, he fell, and will become pure again. I don't see where they get this idea. The seat of knowledge is the soul, external circumstance simply stimulates the soul; knowledge is the power of the soul. Century after century it has been manufacturing bodies. The various forms of incarnation are merely successive chapters of the story of the life of the soul. We are constantly building our bodies. The whole universe is in a state of flux, of expansion and contraction, of change. Vedântism holds that the soul never changes in essence, but it is modified by *Mâyâ*. Nature is God limited by mind. The evolution of nature is the modification of the soul. The soul in essence is the same in all forms of being. Its expression is modified by the body. This unity of soul, this common substance of humanity, is the basis of ethics and morality. In this sense all are one, and

to hurt one's brother is to hurt one's self.

"Love is simply an expression of this infinite unity. Upon what dualistic system can you explain love? One of the European philosophers says that kissing is a survival of cannibalism, a kind of expression of 'how good you taste'. I don't believe it.

"What is it we all seek : freedom. All the effort and struggle of life is for freedom. It is the march universal of races, of worlds, and of systems.

"If we are bound who bound us? No power can bind the infinite but itself."

After the discourse an opportunity was afforded for asking questions of the speaker, who devoted half an hour to answering them.

The final lecture by the Swami will be delivered next Monday evening on "The Way of Salvation".

## THE NEED OF A NEW ADJUSTMENT

BY THE EDITOR

How to reconcile the opposite tendencies of our time is a problem that has confronted every thinking man all over the world. The competent authorities of different countries deplore the modern life, its defeat and depression in the midst of the conflicting forces that are rampant in the world today. They point out the hopeless contradictions in the realms of thought and life at the present day. The spirit of unconscious make-believe and the loss of true values are prevailing in every sphere of individual and collective life. Science has no doubt made a great advance in making a synthesis of observation, but the modern accumulation of knowledge has not been able to create a synthetic

environment, on the contrary it has brought chaos and disorder by its emphasis on the analytical thinking which goes unaided by any harmonizing principle. It has been rightly observed by Prof. S. Radhakrishnan in one of his works that "we are a generation of intellectuals, keen in analysis, patient in observation, but no great art was ever made of observation and analysis. We are acutely conscious of the present disorder and are anxious to remould society to a better plan. We burn with indignation against wrong and preach ways of overcoming it. But our sufferings are only mental, torments of mind, not agonies of spirit. The true artists undergo profound experience, intense

suffering. They have no time to preach. They live and love. When they translate their experiences into words, we see in them that incalculable quality of mind, the creative passion, which is not a mere skilful arrangement of dead flowers, a work of passion and not mere cleverness." The failure of analytical thinking without any synthetic vision consists in the fact that it has not brought out the full meaning of life, that it has overlooked the demands of the human spirit, and that it has not taken into account all the phases of the world-problem.

The trouble of the modern world arises from the over-development of the lower capacities in man and his deplorable negligence of the higher issues in life. This is why there is always found a general tendency to deery the nobler things of life. We ought to seek after a balanced development of our capacities and strive for unity and coherence in all aspects of life. A synthetic realization should be the goal of all who want to enrich the world and live in the domain of a higher consciousness. Such an experience has to be earned not with intellectual assent alone, but with passion and suffering, faith and struggle. We want to enjoy the consolations of a synthetic outlook but are not prepared for the pains that are essential for its practice. The age demands that we live the life in which we can achieve the co-ordination between such a theory and its practice in private life and in society.

The reconciliation of the conflicting tendencies can be sought in an active principle of synthesis between economism and religion, science and philosophy, philosophy and life, and the orient and the occident. Then alone we shall find order and purpose in universal thought and activity, and can liberate the world from fancied limitations. Then alone the world will be saved from the dis-

ruptive and destructive forces, and mankind will work consciously under a unifying law in order to serve a common purpose. The temper of the modern life will then be elevated, and all isolated, unsympathetic details will be submerged in the surging tide of love. To live such a principle in individual and collective life requires the spiritual unfoldment of man which goes ahead of any synthetic basis to be born. In the rush and clamour of the modern life, people do not have an adequate consciousness of what the spirit in man can do and how it can refashion this distracted world of ours. We need first of all this consciousness that inward light alone can enable us to feel the harmony underneath the conflicting tendencies and can bestow on us the power to realize the significance of a synthetic vision. To earn that consciousness we ought to stop the mainsprings of conflict that stand in the way of our spiritual development.

## II

The conflict between economism and religion is a burning topic of the day. The industrial civilization has brought in its train cruel competition, social unrest, and a materialistic interpretation of life. Almost all countries have adopted such methods of production and distribution as have seriously influenced the religious life of man all over the world. It has made man's life more artificial than before, has multiplied material wants, and has dulled his awareness of religious reality. It has dissolved from his life the sense of need for religious development and has fixed his sole attention upon the gross enjoyments of life. The economic aspect of life has been too prominent in society, and the worker in any occupation of life is a slave of the machine in the machine-dominated atmosphere of the

present day. In this connection, Dr. Radhakamal Mookerjee observes in a recent article : "The Industrial Revolution transferred labour from man to mechanical appliances driven by power-generating machines. The machines are for the most part self-sufficient and too large and complicated to be under the individual worker's control. The worker not merely loses zest and initiative but his own life must henceforth follow the rhythm of brute force of the machine. The machine knows neither excellence nor beauty. Both its method and its standard of work are dictated by inert materials and inorganic forces. Man must adopt himself to these in order to earn and live. The organic adaptation must be as close to mechanical standardization as possible, for the machine standardizes everything—tools and materials, process and product. The mechanistic discipline of standardized mass production dominates man's interests and attitudes. The processes of standardized production in one industry interlock with those in a large number of other industries. Thus the machine process gradually absorbs all kinds of labour. Secondly, the daily routine of the workers' lives is standardized. The worker must fit his ideas, feelings, and behaviour into a cold mechanical rhythm which carries him along like a wagon on rails. Thirdly, a mechanistic universe is envisaged by the worker. Uppermost in his mind is the intricate balance of mechanical appliances, raw materials and organized processes, governed by the laws of physics and chemistry. The latter determines his attitude to Man and towards Nature." It is now obvious that a mechanistic outlook has degenerated the modern man who suffers from under-development of religious feelings and impulses. Social idealists must realize that they should not eschew any true religion,

simply because a powerful social revolution is necessary to counteract the evils of economic exploitation and social inequality born of capitalism. Communism has drawn the attention of the individual man to a social philosophy and urged him to sacrifice personal gain at the altar of economic freedom for all. It has afforded better distribution of wealth, leisure, and other amenities of life. But by denying the necessity of religion it has standardized man and jeopardized his religious progress. Economism can hardly solve all the problems of life and hardly establish genuine relations of kinship and amity among different races and nations. The freedom of the soul is the goal of life and all human endeavours should tend towards it. Besides this, in the work of building human brotherhood, religion bereft of institution and dogma has proved to be no mean factor in the history of the world. Therefore, economism must be wedded to religion so that a new civilization might be born in the near future.

### III

The co-operation between scientists and philosophers is felt to be indispensably necessary in the great task of discovering truth. Science should shake hands with philosophy to guard itself from unphilosophical dogmatism, whereas philosophy should look to the results of scientific enquiry for comparing notes. It is the business of both science and philosophy to harmonize thought and life. Prof. McKenzie observed in course of his presidential speech at the last session of the Indian Philosophical Congress : "The trouble is that the scientist is not merely a scientist; he is also a man. It is always difficult for the scientist to avoid ultimate questions. It has become so easier for him to do so with the increasing degree of specialization among the sciences. The scientist

cannot free himself from the pressure of philosophical questions. They force themselves upon him, and the choice is not between facing them and ignoring them, but it is between giving a hasty and ill-considered answer to them and taking pains to think out a satisfying answer. We may deplore the fact that with all their thinking, the philosophers have not reached agreement on any of the profound questions with which they have concerned themselves. But there is still more confusion among the facile solutions offered by shallow thinkers. And philosophers of all schools continue to feel with Socrates that even the discovery of their own ignorance is no mean achievement."

It is pleasing to note that great scientists of the day cannot evade philosophical questions. They realize the limitations of scientific quest and the need for research in wider fields. Sir James Jeans talks of a Great Mathematician behind the veil and admits that the present-day science is favourable to idealism. He observes in one of his recent books: "Our last impression of nature, before we began to take our human spectacles off, was of an ocean of mechanism surrounding us on all sides. As we gradually discard our spectacles, we see mechanical concepts continually giving place to mental. If from the nature of things we can never discard them entirely, we may yet conjecture that the effect of doing so would be the total disappearance of matter and mechanism, mind reigning supreme and alone." Sir Arthur Eddington says: "The old atheism is gone. Mind is the first and most direct thing in our experience; all else is merely remote inference. Religion belongs to the realm of spirit and mind, and cannot be shaken." J. S. Haldane writes: "The material world, which has been taken for a world of blind

mechanism, is in reality a spiritual world seen very partially and imperfectly. The only real world is the spiritual world. . . . The truth is that not matter, not force, not any physical thing, but mind, personality, is the central fact of the universe." Kirtly J. Mather, an eminent geologist affirms: ". . . the universal reality is mind. Matter becomes simply an expression of mind. . . . For me God is everything in the universe which tends to produce a fine personality, in a human being." Prof. Einstein adds: "I believe in God, the God of Spinoza; who reveals himself in the orderly harmony of the universe. The basis of all scientific work is the conviction that the world is an ordered and comprehensible entity, and not a thing of chance." The road to ultimate Reality is open to all, be they scientists or philosophers. What is needed is that the researches of science should be combined with philosophical thinking to usher in a new culture.

#### IV

Every science strives after finding out laws or uniformities in its own field. Philosophy tries to harmonize them and arrive at a unity of knowledge. There are various ways of approach and modes of speculation in the history of philosophy itself. There are doubts and differences in the ultimate conclusions reached by different systems of philosophy. Therefore, philosophy must be put and experimented upon in the laboratory of life. In India, the highest philosophy was the result of practical efforts made by the people who were not only thinkers but men of action. Unless philosophical truths are tested by the touchstone of life, they will remain as it is in the West "the thinking consideration of things". Hence arises the great need of co-ordination between life and philosophy.

The *Upanishads* declare : "Those who see but One in all the changing manifoldness of this universe, unto them belongs eternal Truth—unto none else, unto none else." They describe the universe in its fundamental relation with Reality which is essentially of the nature of Knowledge or Consciousness. All objects in nature derive their existence from Knowledge, hence Knowledge is the basis of all living and non-living objects. They advance further and analyze the realization of the Vedic seers that the different functions of mind are only different names of Consciousness. If these be the spiritual experiences of men, we have every reason to believe that the highest philosophy is the outcome of life.

## V

The gulf between the orient and the occident has done a good deal of harm to humanity and has created disharmony even among the thinking people of the world. Truth cannot have any geographical limits, and so there is the necessity of closely understanding the oriental and occidental modes of thought and life. Men of balanced outlook never hesitate to appreciate the distinctive merits of both, rather they try to make a synthesis of their respective points of view. Wrong distinctions have arisen out of superiority complex, bias, and hatred. It is a mistake to say that the orient is full of quietism while the occident is full of activism, and that the former is devoid of energy and public spirit while the latter is devoid of contemplativeness and mysticism. The oriental outlook is not all good, nor is the occidental all brilliant. There is the mixture of good and bad in either of them. A man of synthetic vision combines in him the best elements of both and interprets the world neither in terms of the orient, nor

in those of the occident. Luc Durtain observes : "A geographer, a mathematician who looks at space, can speak of East and West and oppose one to the other. But how is it still possible today, in the pure realm of thought, to set the ideas of these two phases of humanity in hostile alignment against each other? This brings to mind the picture of a being who instead of acting and thinking as a whole, would be the prey of quarrels between the left side and the right side of his body; who would make his two hands fight against each other, when they are meant to work together on earth and to reach up together towards the stars." The quarrel of the two has divided mankind economically, socially, politically, and culturally. It can be settled when a new adjustment is conceived and put into practice for an all-round development of the individual man and for the progress of humanity as a whole. The secret of such an adjustment lies in our living in and dying for the universal life. We need to rise above excess of egoism and individualistic desire for superiority. Those who wish to see unity are sure to find it in superficial diversity. The spirit alone and not words can give us life eternal and show the way to peace between opposites, extremes, and temperamental differences. We may avoid hatred and cultivate love, if we do not cling to the differences which generally have their origin in some catch-words without any precise, or even any meaning—the differences that are glibly talked about Asiatic or Eastern thought and European or Western thought. All scriptural writings teach us to look at the things of the flesh with the eyes of the Spirit, not at the things of the Spirit with the eyes of the flesh. Do not all really great souls of both East and West maximize the unity of mankind on a spiritual basis?



# RAMAKRISHNA AND THE HARMONY OF RELIGIONS

BY PROF. DR. HELMUTH VON GLASENAPP

From time immemorial, the existence of a large number of religions, which have been striving for recognition by mankind has occupied the minds of religious thinkers. The deeper a man studies the teachings of a religion, the more will he be perturbed by the fact, that the religion, with which he is closely connected and in which he sees the last and the highest truth embodied, unites only a small part of the dwellers of the earth, while the majority of the people of our planet follow other religions. He has, therefore, to seek for an explanation of the fact that all men do not recognize like him the absolute worth of the religion to which he has wedded himself.

The dogmatist solves the problem very simply and conveniently by considering as erroneous everything which differs from his own convictions. This standpoint is clearly seen in the great religions of the west, especially in Judaism and its two daughter religions, Christianity and Mahomedanism. For the orthodox theologians the Bible, i.e. the old and the new testament is the only holy scripture which authentically communicates the transcendental truths of the religion, since the Bible alone is considered to be divine revelation. It is therefore the only source from which the knowledge about God should be derived and it is the authoritative basis on which every theological system is built. It is immaterial, whether it is (as for the Protestants) the only formal principle of faith, or whether it is (as for the Catholics) only the holy means of instruction for the teachers authorized by God and as

such is continuously explained and supplemented by authoritative ecclesiastical tradition and rules of faith in preaching the revelation. All teaching which is not based on this revelation is therefore for the orthodox Christians quite different from that based on the revelation of the Bible. It is the work of man and therefore completely erroneous. What is correct in their eyes is that which arises from the general divine revelation communicated to mankind after the creation of the world. It was gradually lost to mankind weakened by the original sin, so that it gave rise to unbelief and idolatry. Since it is absolutely essential to follow the true faith, as it is taught by the revelation in the Bible to attain salvation, eternal damnation awaits unbelievers, a prospect which, of course, stands in direct contradiction to the theory of justice and mercy of God.

Different non-Christian sects which consider a definite holy text as the basis of all truth assume a similar, sharp dogmatic standpoint in deciding what is true religion and what is man's correct work. Of course, many schools judge more leniently about those who do not follow the true religion. According to the view of the followers of the theory of transmigration of souls, for heretics there is at least the possibility to understand the truth and attain salvation in a subsequent life. It is only those who boast of the possession of a divine revelation that criticize the views of the followers of other religions. The same intolerance is shown by those who have derived their "World-philosophy" through rational considerations

or by meditating upon the nature of things or by following masters who follow atheistic or rationalistic philosophy. There also prevails the naive conception, that the proper teaching of "wisdom" is the highest goal and is the truth which is obligatory for all men and has the sole disposal of the means of grace.

Every dogmatic standpoint undeniably offers to the follower of a religion special advantages. It gives him an unshakable foundation for the consideration of the world and life and builds a solid embankment for him on which the waves of doubt rebound, as the standpoint offers him at once a sure rule of conduct.

The history of the world proves on all hands that all great men who have decidedly influenced human thought were able to do so only because they were convinced of the general applicability of their own views and felt that the views of others were erroneous, which would therefore have to be corrected. Would Paul have had the power to spread the gospel of Christ in the countries round the Mediterranean Sea, had it not been for his unshakable belief that Christ rose from the dead and by his expiatory death saved all people who believed in him? Even so, the triumphal progress of Islam, which conquered a large part of the world in a very short time, would have been impossible, if its champions had not imagined that they had been commissioned by God to spread the faith. The philosopher also must firmly believe that his system is the best explanation of the world and the most suitable basis of action, if he wants to secure a place for his teaching in the history of human thought in spite of all obstacles.

Now there is the fact that different teachings which are indeed partly

diametrically opposed have been equally successful; on the other hand, one of them embodies the highest and decisive truth. Can anyone earnestly believe that any religious teaching about God would be accepted by the whole world as the only correct one, when one sees how in history certain countries have changed their religion? Although at one time Christianity was the prevailing religion in North Africa and Nearer East (Orient), today Islam dominates there. Southern Spain was for more than 700 years Mahommedan, until it was wrenched away from the clutches of that religion; Buddhism was extinguished in the land of its birth, in Afghanistan and Turkestan, Java and Sumatra.

Every religion has in course of time undergone such vast changes that, although it preserved its external form, it almost completely changed in its internal significance. Every religious teaching has been so differently interpreted that it appears as if within a definite religion itself, although uniformity has been preserved, there has never been a real and complete union amongst all its followers. If all these facts are taken into consideration, the belief that a particular religion is the only one which has at its disposal the means of grace and therefore at some future time will encompass the whole world, is completely unfounded. From the multiplicity of religions we may rather conclude that they all incorporate only a part of the eternal truth and that the difference in teaching is due to the nature and suited to the character of the different persons.

The fact that it will never be possible to convert all men to one of the historical religions has not been able to divest the minds of many thinkers of the idea that a universal religion is possible. Since such a universal religion

is not one of the historical religions, it must lie after these and in fact beyond all these. It would have to comprise all the eternal truths contained in every one of them, but not what has been introduced by man. Attempts have been made to create such a universal religion in the East and in the West at different periods of time; let us take for example the gnostic systems of modern times, the attempts of Akbar, Kabir and Nānak to form a higher religion by uniting Islam and Hinduism and the attempts of the Brahmo Samaj and other societies to combine all religions. However praiseworthy all these attempts may be, none of them has met with any permanent success. For, every attempt to build a new temple by taking eclectic key-stones from every religion must have a strong subjective stamp, since there is no criterion to decide whether a religion is true. It is only by giving quite new interpretations or weakly formulating their contradictory principles of faith that it is possible to bring about harmony between different manners of view, which by nature stand in distinct contrast with one another. The avenging God of the Old Testament can be brought into consonance with difficulty with the idea of the impersonal Brahman, which is by nature "Existence, knowledge and bliss," and the teachings of Christianity and Mahomedanism about resurrection were contradictory to the Buddhistic theory of the non-existence of an 'I' and the eternal change of all created things. All such artificial fusions of religions can count upon the support of only a particular class of people. They are like the artificially created languages like Esperanto, which were used only by a definite circle, but could never replace the old languages. Religion can never by nature be a lifeless abstraction. It

must offer to its followers something concrete, in order to be able to fulfil its functions, viz., rigidly sketched religious teachings which show a way to thinkers to solve the problem of the world and life, an adequate cult which excites the religious feeling and an ethics which can be the guiding principle for the will. The forces inherent in religion come into action when it has certain limitations and conditionalities to dogmatically fix and express infinite possibilities. However comprehensive and universal a religion may be and although it may unite in itself various forms of belief and worship, it can be effective only when it impresses on everything an individual stamp, so that all its phenomena are penetrated by a uniform spirit. This is possible only when it carries a personal note, which distinguishes it from all others; for it is only something comprehensible that can excite religious thought, feeling and will. It is only something which is rigidly sketched and restricted that can form the man. Therefore, religions which wished to clearly unveil the truth in others by freeing it from all limitations have assumed other forms in the course of development. They defined their teaching and developed definite rituals (veneration of the founder and his relics) and laid down definite ethical commandments and prohibitions, which were binding on all their followers. They, thereby became separate religions, viz., the Sikh religion, in which *nava vidhāna* and other rituals are observed.

What has been mentioned above clearly shows that harmony cannot be established by synthesis between all religions. All endeavours in this direction have only been of a transitory nature and ceased with the founder and his circle of followers, or they have undergone a change with time. They

thus gradually became dogmatic religions, which differ from others by the speciality of their teachings and rituals, and not by their nature.

Should one therefore believe that there is no truth which underlies all religions and that even if such a truth exists, it cannot be understood? Certainly not! We must only see that we do not seek for the truth in a sphere where it cannot be found. Great credit is due to the Indians who recognized even in early times that no religious or philosophical system is able to explain 'Existence,' as it appears about the existence of God, or show a satisfactory path to salvation. Every teaching can be no more than a "manner of view" (Darshana). It is the attempt of a particular intellect to explain 'Existence', as it appears to it from its own particular point of view. No teaching can claim to be able to give a quite satisfactory explanation of the world or to be a path to salvation, which is within the reach of all. But every teaching is to a certain extent like a torch, which lights the way to an individual through darkness; but it is not a sun, which simultaneously gives light to all human beings. Let us take another example. One can see and describe only a part of a mountain from the point from which one views it. It is only the person who rises and sees it from above the earth that can give a complete description of the same. Truth is not realized by one who combines the individual views about the nature of God and the world, but by one who raises one's consciousness beyond all limitations and attains such a high state that all differences between different views vanish. The top of a mountain cannot be climbed by one who goes to it and tries every possible way of

climbing and climbs at one time one part and at another time another part. The goal is reached only by one, who has decided upon a definite path and follows it with energy and perseverance until the end. So the different religions give to their followers different advice about the path which they have to follow and fix for them a goal according to their manner of thinking, world of feeling and the direction of their will. He who has attained the goal will clearly see whether he has climbed to the highest point or he has to climb still further to reach it. He will then know whether he can himself find out the last part of the way or whether definite instructions have been given to him when starting, whose importance he realizes only when he has traversed a good bit of the way to the top of the mountain.

The holy personage whose centenary we are celebrating this year has done a great service to humanity by exhibiting in a new light the deep wisdom of the Vedic Rishis and the great Acharyas in his famous sayings for the benefit of religious men and by realizing them in his own life. Being deeply conscious of the fact that by living in a definite concrete religious world of imagination and following the discipline of rigidly sketched forms of belief it is possible to realize the truth, he succeeded in penetrating into a higher consciousness. By systematically testing the experiences realized by following the different paths of salvation, he realized that the various forms of belief have equal claim for recognition and overcame their limitations. He thus obtained a standpoint which lies "on the other side" of all multiplicity and realized the harmony of religions, which can never be understood with our limited means of thought.

# THE HINDU IDEAL OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION

BY PROF. AKSHAYA KUMAR BANERJEA, M.A.

*(Continued from the last issue)*

## ABSOLUTE TRUTH—THE IDEAL OF MAN'S RATIONAL NATURE

The search for cause and the search for unity are the two expressions of the same essential demand of reason for Truth and necessarily go together. At each step reason discovers that one cause manifests itself in a plurality of effects. It inwardly believes—and its belief is progressively strengthened by its investigations—that the ultimate cause of the innumerable orders of phenomena of experience must be absolutely one,—a causeless and differenceless, infinite and eternal, self-existent Reality, which can account for and unify all the apparent diversities of the universe.

In search for this absolute Truth, the human reason moves to higher and higher planes. From the lowest physical plane of thought it ascends to the vital plane, from the vital plane to the moral plane, from the moral plane to the idealist plane, and from that to the plane of spirituality and absolute self-realization. The higher it rises, the more comprehensive its outlook becomes, the more adequate becomes the causal explanation of the different orders of phenomena, and the more satisfactory becomes the unification of experience. At the highest plane the human reason transcends all its finitude and relativity and becomes itself universal and unconditional in all respects. At that stage it realizes the absolute Truth and becomes identical with it. All differences between object and object, subject

and subject, and subject and object, disappear. All finite reasons are recognized to be the self-manifestations of one absolute Reason under self-imposed limitations, the entire objective universe, consisting of innumerable orders of phenomena, is experienced to be the diversified self-expression of one absolute Reality; and the absolute Reason and the absolute Reality—Knowing and Being—are realized to be identical. It is only when this absolute Truth is realized that the inherent demand of the rational nature of man is fulfilled. This demand is the regulative power, stimulating and governing from within—though unconsciously in the lower planes—all human knowledge in all its departments, and it becomes more and more potent, and self-assertive with the growth of his self-consciousness.

The systematic pursuit of this ideal of Truth requires not only the discipline of the powers of observation and reasoning, but also a proper discipline of the body, the senses and the mental feeling and propensities. The entire course of human life has to be directed towards the realization of this ideal. It is the inherent demand of Reason that all the departments of human activities, domestic and social, economic and political, physical and mental, intellectual and æsthetic, moral and religious,—should be regulated and developed with a view to the realization of the absolute Truth, which is the ultimate ground of all finite and relative truths of our phenomenal experience and which unifies all facts and objects of the uni-

verse by revealing their true characters as the partial self-expressions or appearances of the same infinite and eternal Reality.

#### ABSOLUTE GOOD—THE IDEAL OF MAN'S MORAL NATURE

As man, on account of the essential rationality of his nature, has an inherent demand for the attainment of the absolute Truth, so, on account of the moral constitution of his nature, he has an inherent demand for the attainment of the absolute Good (Sivam). At every stage of the development of his nature, at every plane of his consciousness, man naturally distinguishes between what *is* and what *ought to be*,—between the *actual* states and objects of his experience and the *ideal* to be realized in experience. The ideal,—that which ought to be,—he regards as *good* to be attained, and that which *ought not to be*, but *is*, he regards as *evil* to be shunned. His inner nature moves him towards the realization of *Good* within himself as well as in the outer world, and the abandonment of *Evil*. Man is essentially a votary of Good.

But his idea of Good changes with the change of his plane of consciousness,

with the development of his rational nature. So long as man's sensuous nature is predominant and reason bows down to it as its faithful and resourceful servant, the satisfaction of the demands of his sensuous nature,—his sensuous happiness and earthly prosperity,—his devotion to and realization of *Kâma* is accepted by his moral consciousness as the *Good* to be attained. He then regards the pains and sufferings of actual experience as *evils*,—as what ought not to be—as what has to be destroyed or left behind. The moral constitution of his nature prompts him to develop and employ all his powers of thought and will for

the deliverance of his sensuous nature from all pains and sufferings and for the attainment of the maximum of sensuous happiness and earthly position and prosperity. All discoveries and inventions, all organizations and contrivances, all human relations and co-operations, based on this conception of *Good* and directed towards the realization of this sensuous ideal by the human race, constitute a civilization, which, however glorious and gorgeous from the point of view of man's sensuous consciousness, is of a very low order from the point of view of the innermost demand of his essential nature.

When the rational and moral aspects of the consciousness of man free themselves from the domination of his sensuous nature and realize the inherent superiority of their own essential demands, the conception of *Good* rises to higher and higher planes and it is sought to be attained even at the sacrifice of mundane happiness and prosperity. It is felt that what contributes to the satisfaction of the demands of sensuous nature is not on that account morally good, and that what is morally good ought to be pursued even though it may be accompanied by consequences not relished by the sensuous consciousness.

What then does goodness consist in? It is held that *Good* is that which satisfies the essential demand of moral consciousness, and it is not to be confused with the satisfaction of any other demand of human nature. As man's reason seeks for Truth for its own sake, so man's moral consciousness seeks for *Good* for its own sake. Man has to follow the dictates of his moral consciousness and rise to the conception and realization of higher and higher ideals of moral life. He has to exercise his will and regulate his actions to turn what his moral nature demands as

*what ought to be* into *what is*,—to convert the ideal into actuality. He has to proceed onwards in this course of development, till he realizes the absolute *Good*, i.e. the ultimate Ideal, which being realized, his moral nature is perfectly satisfied, and he is no longer troubled by any sense of *ought* as distinct from what *is* attained in his actual experience. At that stage there is no gulf between his will and its object, actual or possible. He then feels that what he had to do is fully done, what he had to become he has actually become, what he had to attain is perfectly attained.

#### ESSENTIAL IDENTITY OF TRUTH AND GOOD

Now, on account of the essential identity between the rational and the moral consciousness, the more is consciousness developed and awakened, the more it feels the identity between *Truth* and *Good*. Human reason, in course of its development, progressively comprehends that what the moral consciousness demands as *what ought to be* is essentially *more real* than *what is* in actual experience,—that the actual states of consciousness and facts of experience, unsatisfactory to man's moral nature, are only partial realizations of the *Ideal* of his moral life, which must be a reality of a higher order and which is experienced as such on a higher plane of consciousness. As a man rises to higher and higher planes, he finds that what was apprehended as the *Ideal* in the lower planes has now revealed itself to be *truly real*, and what then appeared as real has now been discovered to be a partial manifestation of this Reality. *Truth* and *Good* are thus more and more thoroughly identified in the higher and higher planes of the development of man's rational

and moral nature. At the highest plane, the absolute *Truth* and the absolute *Good*—*Satyam* and *Sivam*—are realized as absolutely identical.

#### BEAUTY—IDEAL OF AESTHETIC CONSCIOUSNESS

The essential nature of man's consciousness is not only rational and moral, but also æsthetic. The æsthetic aspect of his consciousness seeks for Beauty (*Sundaram*) as its Ideal. Beauty is that the realization of which gives satisfaction to man's emotional nature. In the phenomenal self-manifestation of his emotional nature, he experiences diversities of feelings, and it is through these feelings that he receives the objects and facts of the world in which he lives and moves. The objects which he receives through the feeling of aversion appear ugly to him and become sources of pain, and those which he receives through the feeling of love (*Prem*) appear beautiful and become objects of enjoyment. Beauty is essentially related to the feeling of love, and ugliness to the feeling of aversion. Man naturally seeks to attain and enjoy what he loves, and to avoid or to get rid of what he dislikes,—he wants to realize Beauty and to remain free from any touch of ugliness.

So long as his inner nature is overshadowed by his sensuous demands, his emotion of love is identified with sensuous inclination and manifests itself in the form of a feeling of attraction for what his sensuous nature seeks for and experiences pleasure in attaining. Consequently objects of sensuous enjoyment appear beautiful to him, and objects of sensuous suffering appear ugly. But love is not essentially a factor in his sensuous nature. Love is an expression of the demand of man's innermost self,—it is an emotion per-



taining to his essential nature. When the consciousness of man rises to a higher plane and emancipates itself from the bondage of sensuousness, he feels that as his innermost self has a demand for Truth and Good, so it has a demand for Beauty. Man in his essential character has an inherent love for the absolute Beauty, the realization of which gives satisfaction to the emotional aspect of his spiritual nature.

#### TRUTH, GOODNESS, AND BEAUTY— THREE ASPECTS OF ABSOLUTE REALITY

Rationality, morality, and love are the three aspects of the essential nature of man as a spiritual being dwelling in the phenomenal world, and Truth, Goodness, and Beauty are the three corresponding aspects of the ultimate Ideal, which his essential nature inherently seeks for and the realization of which should give him the consciousness of self-fulfilment and the enjoyment of perfection within himself. What is conceived as the ultimate Ideal, when viewed from the plane of the imperfectly developed self-consciousness struggling for self-fulfilment, reveals Itself to be the absolute Reality, when viewed from the plane of the perfectly self-fulfilled consciousness, completely emancipated from the sensuous limitations. This absolute Reality, when conceived as the ultimate Ideal sought for by our rational consciousness and realized in the path of knowledge (Jnâna-Yoga), is perceived as the absolute Truth; when conceived as the ultimate Ideal sought for by our moral consciousness and realized in the path of moral activity (Karma-Yoga), is attained as the absolute Good; and when conceived as the ultimate Ideal of our æsthetic consciousness and realized in the path of Love (Bhakti-Yoga), is enjoyed as the absolute Beauty.

#### MAN, BEING ESSENTIALLY SPIRITUAL, DEMANDS UNION WITH THIS ABSOLUTE REALITY

Rationality, morality, and love have been found to be the three fundamental self-expressions of man's spiritual nature. It is because man is essentially a spiritual being, that, though living and moving in a phenomenal world in the midst of various relations and limitations, he is never satisfied with the situation in which he is placed and has an inherent demand for getting rid of all kinds of limitations and enjoying the bliss of perfect self-fulfilment. Even in the lowest stages of self-awakening he feels in the innermost core of his heart that though dwelling in the phenomenal world, he is not of the phenomenal world, and that though all the functions relating to himself are apparently performed in and through the sensuous and physical organism, the demands of his essential nature are not satisfied by the fulfilment of the needs of this organism. From the beginning of his course of struggle for self-fulfilment, he has an indistinct sense of the Infinite and Eternal. He recognizes, however indistinctly, that he essentially belongs to the realm of the Infinite and Eternal and that he has inherent right to transcend the finite and transitory phenomena with which he experiences himself to be so inextricably related. His very consciousness of the self or the ego or the 'I' is a consciousness of the Infinite in the finite, the Eternal in the transitory, the unchangeable in the changing, the spiritual in the phenomenal world.

For the perfect realization of this spiritual character of the self in distinct consciousness, man is impelled from within to move forward and struggle with the phenomenal limita-



tions in which he finds himself. This demand for self-realization finds expression in his phenomenal life in the forms of the demands of rationality, morality, and love, which cannot be satisfied except by the knowledge of the absolute Truth, the attainment of the absolute Good, and the union with the absolute Beauty. These ideals of the three fundamental aspects of man's spiritual nature, when realized, are found to be eternally united in the nature of the absolute Spirit, which is the one absolutely self-existent, self-conscious, self-perfect, and self-enjoying Reality, and the ultimate Ground, Cause and Substance of the universe. It is in the realization of its unity with this absolute Spirit, that the perfect self-realization, self-fulfilment and self-enjoyment of the human spirit,—the satisfaction of all the demands of its nature consists.

#### THE ABSOLUTE SPIRIT—THE SUPREME IDEAL AS WELL AS THE ABSOLUTE REALITY

This absolute Spirit—Brahman—has been characterized in the Upanishads as Satyam (the absolute Truth), Jñānam (the absolute Consciousness), and Anantam (the Infinite), as Suddham Apāpabiddham (the absolute Purity without the possibility of any touch of impurity), as Prajnānam Ānandam (the absolute knowledge and the absolute Bliss), as Rasa (the absolute Beauty), etc. He is conceived as the ultimate Ideal to be realized by the human spirit in his direct experience as his own true Self and the true Self of the universe, and also as the Cause, Ground, Sustainer and Ruler of the phenomenal world. Thus the ultimate Ideal of human life and the ultimate Reality of the objective universe are absolutely identical. What in the lower planes of his experience and thought man perceives to be

immutable laws of nature determining the movements and changes of the phenomena of the world, he perceives in the higher planes of his self-consciousness to be the laws of the self-expression and self-enjoyment of the absolute Spirit, who is no other than his own true Self. What appeared to be the laws of external necessity restricting the freedom of his will and action are then experienced to be the laws of internal freedom—the Divine laws—governing the phenomenal world in such a way as to make it the most suitable field for his self-awakening, self-expression, and self-realization. He then discovers that the paradoxical situation in which he found himself placed was nothing but Mâyâ—illusion, due to his ignorance of the true nature of himself and the world and the internal relationship between the two.

When the people, though actually moving in the sensuous planes, are taught to look upon themselves and the phenomena of the various departments of experience from this point of view, their outlook on life and the world, their sense of value, their line of thought and action, their mode of self-expression and self-development, become naturally different from those of the people who are taught to idealize the sensuous aspect of their nature and to look upon men and things from the sensuous point of view.

#### THE SPIRITUAL OUTLOOK—THE BASIS OF HINDU CIVILIZATION AND CULTURE

In the glorious days of the Hindu society, this view of the Ideal and the Real was not merely the product of philosophical speculation of a few extraordinary thinkers and visionaries and the subject-matter of theoretical discussion among them; but it pervaded the mental atmosphere of the entire society and regulated the thoughts, emotions,

and actions of all sections of its people. It acquired a great practical force and formed the foundation of the structure of the Hindu society. The gradation of the people into different orders or Varnas and the ascertainment of their relative superiority and inferiority were made in accordance with this view. It is on this principle that the Brâhmanas were recognized to be a higher class of people than those who wielded the political authority (Kshatriyas) as well as those who attained economic prosperity and were engaged in the production and distribution of wealth in the country (Vaisyas). It is on the same ground that the Sannyâsins,—those who renounced all the interests of sensuous nature and devoted themselves to the perfect realization of the spiritual Ideal—were the objects of veneration to all classes of people and were regarded as setting up true ideals of human life, which every one should aspire after pursuing.

It is in accordance with this conception of the real nature of man and the world and of man's mission in the world that systematic rules were laid down in the Sâstras for the guidance of the different classes of men and women, with varying degrees of intellectual, moral, aesthetic, and spiritual attainments and capacities, in their domestic, social, political, and religious life. To a Hindu, accordingly, Dharma did not mean any particular type of discipline or any particular faith, attitude or practice; but it meant the regulative principles and laws of the entire human life, whatever might be the field of its activity. All the human powers,—physical, mental, and intellectual, individual as well as collective—had to so exert themselves as to be consistent with this view of life and to contribute to the steady approach of the people in general towards the ultimate

Goal. All human relations were governed primarily by the notion of *Duty* and only secondarily by the notion of *Right*. The members of the society were taught from the beginning of their life that their true well-being lay chiefly upon the due performance of their own duties, and very little upon the assertion and enforcement of their rights, which virtually means the exertion of pressure upon others to do their duties. The performance or non-performance of duties by others should not, from the true human point of view, lead any one astray from his own path of duty or produce any evil passion in his mind in relation to them. The idea was current that the evil passions of the mind, such as lust and greed, anger and malice, egotism and selfishness, censoriousness, vindictiveness, and suspiciousness, etc. were internal enemies, which could do much more harm to a man than any external enemy, and which injured the persons subject to them to a far greater extent than the persons towards whom they were directed. It was firmly believed that the world process was governed by an inviolable principle of justice, and that the result of every good or evil deed, even of every good or evil thought and emotion—must, according to the moral law, be reaped by the agent himself. It was believed that our pleasure and pain, prosperity and adversity, liberty and slavery, political, social, and economic conditions, were all our own creations, the moral effects of our own Karma, though we might outwardly trace them to various apparent sources. It was taught that if we wanted to get rid of the evils from which we might be suffering and to attain the desirable conditions—physical, mental, political, social, economic, etc.—, we should improve our moral worth, by performing our duties faithfully with a spirit of devotion, engaging ourselves

in virtuous deeds and cultivating virtuous thoughts and emotions, and not by cherishing any ill-will towards others or trying to take vengeance upon those who were found to be the vehicles of those evils. Such principles were applied to individuals, classes, communities, and nations alike.

As a result of such teachings for centuries and millenniums, all classes of people in India are born and brought up in an atmosphere of moral and spiritual ideas, which give a distinctive turn to their angle of vision with regard to the life's interests and the world's phenomena. Put questions to any illiterate boy or girl belonging to the lowest grade of the Hindu society, and you will find that such truths as the world process being the expression of the Divine Will, its being governed according to the moral law, man's conditions and inclinations being the products of his own past Karma, the improvement of man's lot being dependent upon the improvement of his moral worth, the relative insignificance of man's sensuous interests and the intrinsic value of his spiritual advancement, the attainment of union with God being the ultimate ideal of human life, etc. are to him almost as good as actually experienced facts. He will speak of them in his uncultured tongue without any tinge of learned pedantry as if these are things of every day experience requiring no education to be acquainted with them.

This spiritual outlook is the basis of Hindu culture and civilization. The Hindu literature and art, the Hindu politics and economics, the Hindu industry and agriculture, the Hindu sociology and social customs and manners, the physical, chemical, medical, and astronomical sciences of the Hindus, not to speak of the philosophical and religious systems of the Hindus,—all

these have evolved out of the fundamental spiritual need of human nature. The worth of every human institution and organization, the value of every science and art, the importance of the progress in every department of human activity, have been judged by the Hindu thinkers by reference to their conduciveness to the realization of the Spiritual Ideal,—by reflection upon their capacity to make the path towards the absolute Truth, Beauty, and Goodness easier for mankind. The demand of sensuous nature have never been ignored, but always subordinated to those of the essential nature of the true self of man. Ways and means have been most carefully discovered and invented for keeping the sensuous aspects of his nature in the proper condition to be in the service of his true self.

Sometimes important sections of people under powerful guidance have attempted to give a supreme position to the demands and hankerings of their sensuous nature, and there have been extraordinary conquests of natural forces, accumulation of wealth, centralization of power, development of industry, etc. But such attempts have been in India followed by a special manifestation of the Divine Spiritual Energy to destroy their man-killing influence and restore the harmony of human nature. In India such Asuric civilizations could never be long-lived, and perhaps the seed of their destruction is present in the very basis of these civilizations. The sensuous urge being at the basis of these civilizations, the more they approach the realization of their potentialities, the more does the seed of their destruction also put forth shoots and acquire strength, and ultimately they are destroyed and the true self of man finds its proper scope for self-expression and self-fulfilment. The inner workings of the so-called modern

civilization also, if studied with a deeper insight, furnish ample data for apprehending ominous probabilities. In order that the best fruits of human endeavours that have been obtained in course of the progress of this civilization may not be destroyed along with their evil associates, a radical change of outlook is essentially necessary; it has to be re-

modelled on a spiritual basis; politics, economics, industry, and commerce have to be subordinated to morality and religion; science and art have to be placed in the service of spirituality. The Hindu outlook ought to be the guiding principle of modern civilization, in order that it may be saved from its otherwise inevitable doom.

## EVOLUTION OF MODERN CIVILIZATION AND FAILURE OF REVOLUTIONS

By DR. TARAKNATH DAS, PH.D.

There is no doubt about the fact that we are facing a new era in the history of evolution of modern civilization. Democratic ideals and political institutions based upon the representative system and parliamentary form of government are being assailed by doctrines of Communism, Fascism, and Nazism, which oppose liberalism and advocate government by dictatorship of some form—dictatorship of the proletariat as practised in Soviet Russia, dictatorship upholding the ideals of extreme nationalism as it is in Fascist Italy or dictatorship of Racialism as preached and practised by the Hitler regime in Germany.

Every thoughtful student of history, interested in the future of our present-day social order is faced with the question: Is a violent social revolution essentially necessary or even inevitable for the progress of human society? There are some sociologists and political thinkers who believe that bloody revolutions are inevitable results of oppressive rule of autocrats and irresponsible ruling class who denied the fundamentals of human rights to the masses. They justify the communist revolution in Russia; and to them all revolutions are inevitable and necessary instruments of

progress. Others think that all important beneficent changes in our social order have been brought about through peaceful and untiring work of reformers and humanitarians; while the revolutionists of various ages used the successful activities of social reformers as stepping-stones for violent changes, which always defeated their so-called aims for human progress.

Dr. Everett Dean Martin, professor of Social Philosophy at Cooper Union, New York, in his recent work, *Farewell to Revolution*<sup>1</sup> presents a well-worked thesis which should be carefully considered by all students of government and sociology. The central thesis of this thought-provoking work is “*the undeniable futility of revolution. The history of revolutions shows them to be the supreme example of human folly*” (p. 228). He suggests that all revolutions have been brought about supposedly for the welfare of the people, but in actuality they are the work of a minority party which rules in the name of the people. This minority political party, to keep themselves in power, destroys

<sup>1</sup> Everett Dean Martin, *Farewell to Revolution*. New York. W. W. Norton & Company. 1935. Pages 380. Price \$3.00.

the freedom of the majority and retards the cause of human progress. Professor Martin uses his extensive knowledge of social psychology in interpreting history of revolutions and revolutionary tactics, in terms of romanticism and mass psychology. In this work, he has made a systematic survey of major revolutions from the time of ancient Rome up to the Communist Revolution in Russia, Fascist Revolution in Italy, and National Socialist Revolution in Germany.

The fall of the Roman Empire which was caused partially by the Christian factions and the barbarian invasion of Rome retarded human progress by several centuries. Prof. Martin's conclusions regarding Protestant Revolution or the Reformation may not be palatable to many, as he holds that progress of Christian civilization was retarded by Protestant Revolution, one of the most important factors for many wars in Europe. He holds that the French Revolution failed to emancipate the masses and Proletariat Revolutions of the nineteenth century and the recent revolutions in Russia, Italy, and Germany have executed the precious ideal of human liberty and human rights. He thinks that from the stand-point of mass psychology, in the long run, an appeal to nationalism and racialism is more effective as a propaganda than appealing to the masses on the basis of "working men of the world should unite to overthrow the capitalist class"; and for this reason the masses of Italy and Germany are supporting Fascism and National Socialism in their respective lands. It should be recognized that there is less chance of overthrowing dictatorships in Italy and Germany through internal upheaval.

Mr. Martin is a liberal; and he advocates that those who believe in the priceless heritage of human freedom

handed down to us through liberal ideals and institutions, should defend them against the present-day revolutionary agitations. At the same time, Mr. Martin is not an advocate of *status quo*; but he believes that effective and necessary changes in the social order should be brought about through peaceful means, changes in ideals and through educative processes. One may not agree with him in all the conclusions arrived at by this study, yet it must be recognized that the work is thought-provoking and a substantial contribution to history and sociology.

In his latest work, *Leaders Dreamers and Rebels*<sup>2</sup> Renè Fülöp-Miller, the brilliant author of "the Power and Secret of Jesuits" etc. presents a history of evolution of modern civilization in a most interesting form. The guiding idea of this eminent scholar is that all revolutions and changes in the social order are brought about primarily through the force of "ideas and dreams" of leaders and rebels. He smashes the doctrine of "materialistic conception of history" to bits. In this respect, he is supported by Dr. Martin in his work, *Farewell to Revolution*. The main thesis of the book<sup>2</sup> is: "Material and spiritual causes determine a large part, but not all, of human history. There is a third force, everlastingly at work, deciding human fate quite as much do material necessity and spiritual conception. I refer to the power of dreams." It is a masterly work, giving scholarly account of all important factors and forces in the history of evolution of modern civilization—Fear of the Devil, Influence of the idea of virtue, faith in beneficent Providence wishing for the welfare of the people, ideals of Rights of Man and Rationalism, the ideal and

<sup>2</sup> Renè Fülöp-Miller, *Leaders Dreamers and Rebels*, New York, The Viking Press. 1935. Pages 464. Price \$5.00.

emotionalism of "will to power" and the rise of the mass movements and modern dictatorships. This book may, in a sense, be termed as an account of history of philosophy of social changes. The author has tried to fathom philosophical backgrounds of social theories and changes during various periods of history of civilization.

Discussing the trend of present-day tendencies of modern civilization, he points out that while Karl Marx's philosophy has become the foundation of communism in Russia, one may claim that the philosophy of Nietzsche, Bergson, and Sorel are the foundations of new revolutions with Fascist tendencies of the present era. He writes: *"This new revolution quoted Nietzsche, Bergson, and as the earlier one had quoted Descartes, Voltaire, and Rousseau; the articles of its faith were no longer 'reason' and 'nature', but 'will' and* (p. 394)

Nietzsche's "will to power" and "super-man," Sorel's supremacy of force, Bergson's intuitionism, pragmatism, the mysticism of action, and unqualified voluntarism are the foundations of Fascism. While the leaders of French Revolution and even Communist Revolution in Russia had "Reason, Liberty, and Universal Happiness" as their goal, Fascism demands Discipline, Hierarchy, and Authority in their place. *"Whereas Bolshevism proclaims the mass-man in the name of machinery. Fascism insists that in the age of the machine, demands, before everything else, 'the dominion of the elect' instead of 'the dominion of the masses'".* (p. 405).

What is the difference between Fascism and National Socialism? *"Whereas Mussolini regards the Will as the creative force whose mission is to produce the new form or Gestalt of*

*the nation, Hitler looks upon Race as the creative principle which will restore a living form (Gestalt) to the German nation, now disintegrated by the pursuit of amorphous abstractions . . . . Fascism is based upon the primacy of Will; National Socialism, on the other hand, is founded upon the primacy of Blood . . ."* (pp 408-409)

In this connection, it is well to remember that the Dictators of the type of Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler, Mustapha Kemal are not merely usurpers; but they are accepted leaders of the respective peoples, because their Wills represent the hidden desire of the people and represent the Will of their epochs. The author tries to interpret that the new outlook in the present-day social order and feels that these changes and desires for changes are the outcome of the inner urge of the people, of the present era, for the guidance of society by men who can wield Power for some great idea and assume tremendous responsibility. This spirit of the new era is not confined in Europe; but it has given expressions through such great dreamers and leaders as Mustapha Kemal of Turkey who advocates that "the nation comes first—then Allah—", in the dream of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh of India who believes that "the élite of a race can impose itself as a ruling class" and the New India must awaken its nationalist force regardless of consideration as to the happiness of the masses (p. 422), of China who acknowledged "invincible inequality among human beings," while preaching people's nationalism, people's sovereignty and people's welfare.

The author is a philosopher, he is apparently neither a liberal, nor a communist, nor a Fascist. He is not upset by the new tendencies of the modern civilization but philosophically recog-

nizes them. He recognizes that even in human folly there is the germ of human greatness :

*"In man's great wish-dreams, the kinship between wisdom and folly remains alive; and the history of the attempt to realize these wish-dreams bears witness to the greatness of our race. . ."*

Here is then the synthesis of the evolution of modern civilization, which is the product of human wisdom and human folly. Revolutions may be acts of folly in themselves ; but they are parts of human progress which is not finally determined by any definite form, but is in the state of flux and eternal change and transformation.

## VEDANTA IN U. S. A.

MRS. DONALD DAVIDSON

Within the last fifty years, the philosophy of Vedānta has found an increasing number of friends and sympathizers in America. This growing popularity can be traced to a number of interesting sources, some lying in the philosophy itself, and others in the conditions which prevailed here and made us ready to receive it. Though we see a far greater emphasis laid on material things in the America of today than on the spiritual, religion played an important part in the first colonization of this country. The earliest settlers came here in search of religious freedom, which had been denied them in Europe, and for which they were ready to leave their homes, friends, and relatives, preferring the dangers of a wilderness to restrictions in their worship. The small communities centered around Christian churches of various denominations and turned their attention towards definite spiritual aspirations and ethical standards of life. This period was marked by a religious culture capable of producing an Emerson, Thoreau, Lincoln and Walt Whitman. But America was a young and growing nation. When the natural resources of the vast continent began to be developed, a rush for wealth and success superseded the religious tenden-

cies of the earlier days. The churches began to lose their meaning in the life of the people, and it became increasingly difficult to find a religion that would satisfy such a heterogeneous population. Then the rapid rise of industry so changed the social structure of the country that it soon scattered and disintegrated the original Christian communities.

Another force was at work to draw people away from the churches. With the acceptance of Darwin's theory of evolution in place of the Biblical story of Creation, the very foundations of the Christian churches were undermined, and the Western world turned from religion to science as a new approach to the solution of the riddles of the universe. As the churches of those days were peculiarly narrow and dogmatic, demanding the acceptance of their doctrines without question and rigorously excluding all dissenters, the first storm of doubt raised by science left thoughtful people of a religious temperament in search of a wider horizon. The study of comparative religion which followed, disclosed the good points in other faiths and philosophies ; but the Christian churches were hardly ready to admit the value of teachings other than their own.

Because our churches are still working on this narrow basis of dogma and creed, they cannot satisfy the sincere Christians and countless other seekers after Truth in the West.

But the old religious impulse, though submerged for the time being, was ready for a new awakening. When Swami Vivekananda brought Vedânta to America, its appeal was instantaneous. His message about the freedom of the Soul and brotherhood of Man came as the perfect fulfilment of our Declaration of Independence. The American tradition could not accept what was narrow and limited. Besides, science had made them sceptical of a religion that could not satisfy their reason. In Vedânta was found a marvellous appreciation of the religions of the past, combined with a religious ideal agreeing with the most comprehensive outlook of modern times, and a method so clear and definite that it promises to tell us the real truth about the nature of the world, soul, and God. Moreover, in an age of science, it teaches the essential harmony of all religions and philosophies, all arts and sciences, as representing in reality but so many different approaches towards the realization of the same Truth. As science is trying to find out a single principle by which to explain the various phenomena of the world, the Western mind is prepared to accept a unifying principle behind all spiritual verities. This principle, discovered in India thousands of years ago when the Upanishads proclaimed the unity of God, is in perfect keeping with the ideal of modern advanced thinking. The study of comparative religion may lead the way to a superficial unity. But we are not surprised to find that a true synthesis can only be reached by those who follow the precepts laid down by the seers of old, who had turned their whole attention to the understanding of man's

inner nature, and thus attained the purity of heart necessary for the realization of the Absolute, where all diversity ceases. These factors and those about to be mentioned, constitute the elements lying in the philosophy of Vedânta itself, which attract the sympathetic attention of the people in the West to an extraordinary degree.

The affirmation of the Divine nature of man which is given us in Vedânta, appeals to the deep religious cravings of every heart. The world has not only failed to satisfy our hopes and ambitions, but is apparently reducing us to slavery; slavery to the machine, to the power of wealth, and to fear of disease. Through the disillusionment of financial depression, unemployment, and the constant threat of war, the people are losing faith in the value of transitory things. Thus there is nothing strange or fantastic in the teaching that this material world in itself is an illusion, which we find in Vedânta. The value of the human soul as permanent in an impermanent world, is certainly appreciated in these times. When we are told that each soul is potentially Divine, and that this Divinity can be realized by each and all of us, according to the disciplines best suited to our temperament, it gives us great assurance to face the problems of life with new hope and courage.

The future of the work in America holds out possibilities more far-reaching than we have ever allowed ourselves to dream. The directness of appeal with which these teachings have entered into the hearts of men and women from all walks of life, is an indication of the scope of work before us. We are celebrating the centenary of Sri Ramakrishna's birth this year. Within one hundred years, his life and message have touched all parts of the earth, and groups are being formed everywhere by



devoted souls, whose sincerity and reverence is beyond question, for the study of his teachings. Christianity, three hundred years after the birth of Christ, became acceptable to the people only when Constantine made it a State Religion. Buddha's religion spread far and wide with the help of Asoka's imperial power. Islam became the religion of the people because during its propagation, the state and church were fused into one organization. Again, when these religions gained ascendancy, they found no contemporary religions which could approach them. Christianity superseded the paganism of Greece and Rome, and finally that of the northern peoples of Europe. Buddhism followed upon the degeneration of Brahmin culture, and Islam spread among the desert tribes. Now the world has become highly complex and critical, and all the great religions of the past are themselves under scrutiny. Only a great spiritual genius could find a hearing at such a time. The State under which Sri Ramakrishna lived, is indifferent, if not positively hostile, to the cause of religion. That his teachings and message could spread under these untoward circumstances and opposition shows their inner virility and power to satisfy the complexities of modern life.

The philosophy of the Hindus, as it finds expression in Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, may not be acceptable in its present form to a large number of people who are still obsessed by the material pleasures of life. But this philosophy will certainly appeal to a powerful minority feeling the need of such teachings, and through whom it may ultimately percolate to all strata of society. In order to make this gradual assimilation of Vedānta possible in America, a number of centres were started by Swami Vivekananda's devoted friends in this country, to form nuclei

from which his message could spread. Just as Swami Vivekananda was received with loving admiration and enthusiasm in the '90s, the younger Swamis, who have followed him to assist at the centres, are being welcomed today. It is impossible to describe the gratitude with which the people of America accept the sacrifice of these splendidly educated and finely trained spiritual ambassadors of India to this country, a sacrifice in which they have given up all the contacts of their youth for a strange and none too congenial environment.

It may be interesting to give here some ideas of the work done at one of the Vedānta centres in this country.

On Sunday mornings at eleven o'clock, there are general lectures on vital religious and philosophical subjects, combining the perspective of the Indian spiritual background with the problems of everyday life. Besides these Sunday lectures, there are two regular evening classes on Tuesdays and Fridays, and a special class on the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna is held on Wednesdays.

Each evening class centres around the study and exposition of a particular book. We have had the privilege of hearing the Bhagavad-Gītā read to us, line for line, with the Swami's thoughtful explanations of its philosophical significance and his practical suggestions for the application of its wonderful teachings to our personal problems. At other times, the Upanishads and Vivekachudāmani lift us above the narrow limits of mundane things, to the lofty regions of spiritual revolution and ultimate Truth. Rāja Yoga never fails to attract not only those who are of a psychic temperament, but all serious students of psychology who find that it compares most favourably with modern research in this field. In both the conclusions and the method of Rāja Yoga, Patanjali leads us to a clear understand-

ing of the value of Self-knowledge, a goal which never loses its charm.

On Friday evenings, the Swami gives instruction in concentration and we practise meditation under his direction. This meditation is of the greatest benefit and is having a profound effect upon our lives. In spite of the difficulty experienced in building up a meditation class in an environment where restlessness is the rule, it is most genuinely appreciated by those who wish to find quiet, peace, and relaxation in the midst of the turmoil of this great city. For the men and women who are wearied by a too complex civilization and suffer from the stress and strain of constant competition, it is a welcome relief to have their attention directed within. Especially after a hard day's work, where life is spent in the midst of trivialities, meditation is a great tonic. People of all faiths and creeds participate in these classes. The form of meditation which we practise with the Swami has such an irresistible appeal because we are asked not to meditate upon a cut and dried conception of God, but upon an ideal which transcends all human limitations and manifests itself in the mind of each individual according to his level of evolution.

The class which the Swami holds on the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna is perhaps the greatest contribution which he has made to the progress of our spiritual life. In spite of rigid rules, which include the condition that the students must attend all the other classes and lectures, people are extremely eager to hear the Swami's interpretation of the Gospel, as nothing can equal the all-absorbing interest of spiritual realization as it is demonstrated in the actual life of a person. In this age, when the ideals of Christ and Buddha have almost become dreamy phenomena, it is such a relief to find the same inspiration and

authority in a great spiritual genius who lived in our own times, sharing all our griefs and joys. His teachings give us an intimate knowledge of how a man by his own efforts can become God. The fact that Sri Ramakrishna is the first Incarnation whose sayings were recorded and who was photographed during his lifetime, puts a stamp of reality on his whole personality and makes him so close to us. That fresh impetus towards leading a spiritual life which is so sorely needed, can only come from such a direct and vivid example. Often it is said that renunciation and purity in their perfect state are not possible in this modern age. Thus, when people are more than ever prone to make a compromise with the ideal, here is found a man who lived in the most materialistic period of history, when science was most arrogant, who demonstrated by his own life that renunciation, purity and self-control are possible even now; nay, that they are the absolute minimum which a man must follow for the realization of God. Sri Ramakrishna further demonstrated to us that spiritual laws are the same for all ages and climes, and that if any religious aspirant violates them, he does so at the risk of his own realization. We are indebted to Sri Ramakrishna and his disciples, for showing us how our life may be blessed even in the midst of the confusion of our times, if we can raise our mind to the level of spiritual consciousness. His utterances reveal how God can be made the most important part of our experience, guiding us through our endless difficulties. In the present unsettled condition of social life, when one cannot pin one's faith on money, earthly things, or one's immediate friends and relatives, God alone can be depended upon and may be felt as nearest and dearest to us. And finally, Sri Ramakrishna assures us that after we

have realized God, the whole world will become our intimate family.

The beneficial influence of the Vedânta centres is being felt every day by different groups of people. The Swamis are invited to address students in the universities, and the congregations of various churches from time to time. The progress of these centres, is most satisfying, especially as the growth has been steady and continuous, without resorting to any spectacular methods to attract attention. Occasionally one is startled to find the wife of an ex-President, or some one of international reputation attending the classes. No distinction is made between high and low, rich or poor. Even coloured people come with great regularity. There is a real community of thought

among the students, and their spirit of friendship finds expression in the dinners that are given in celebration of the Durgâ Pujâ, the birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, and Buddha, in course of each season.

In spite of all the facilities for their work, the Swamis feel themselves terribly lonely in this country of unbridled energy and competition. It is left to us to take away their loneliness, without cheap thrill, and to try to join them in that growing spiritual consciousness, whose boundary is not limited by any geographical barriers. We all feel ourselves becoming part of a great thought movement which in course of time must revolutionize the outlook of history, if humanity is to survive.

## HEGEL'S IDEA OF THE ABSOLUTE

BY DRUPAD S. DESAI, M.A., LL.B.

In Philosophy the concept of the Absolute has been applied to two fundamental problems: (1) The problem of absoluteness in human knowledge, and (2) The problem of the Absolute in metaphysics. For our present purposes we will keep ourselves confined to (2).

In Metaphysics, the term 'Absolute' is applied to the whole of Reality. Absolute Reality would mean the ultimate Reality, that Reality which would not require any extraneous facts or factors either for its existence or for its meaning—the Self-existent, the Self-sufficient Being, as it is called.

This makes us appreciate better the distinction between the Metaphysical conception of the Absolute and the religious Idea of God.

Hegel's views on the problem of the nature of what is ultimately real may

be succinctly summarized and brought together as under:

1. *Reality is a System, a Unity.* What is more important to note about it is that it is a Unity of distinguished and related parts.

Hegel derives this belief in the systematic character of the Real unquestionably from the nature of Thought. "To think", said Sir W. Hamilton, "is to relate". And this relating activity of thought, if carried on to its finish, must give us a system, such as Hegel affirms we already can recognize in the nature of Reality.

Even in the material Cosmos, physical science testifies to this assumption of System, of Unity and reason.

The system of Reality to which Hegel points us is Absolute and all-inclusive. Place must be found within it for the

spiritual interests of mankind. Morality and Religion must be parts of Reality no less than Matter or Force.

2. *Reality is a graded System.* In the system of Reality, as conceived by Hegel, we have seen that all parts are justified, for all are needed. But the more important thing to note is that all are not *equally* needed. There is a relation of superiority and inferiority between them.

Primarily, this grading seems to imply that the earlier definitions of Reality vanish as false or inadequate, while the later ones—or, say, only the latest of all—hold the field as adequate to the facts. But it is not so. Those lower, inferior categories are real, and exist in their own sphere. They apply to a part of the Real. There may be a section of Reality within which they are quite appropriate. Only we must keep this in mind that, according to Hegel, not the smallest fragment of Reality can be finally or fully explained except by the highest categories. This grading, again, may be regarded as a sort of evolution, not in time, of course.

Probably, Hegel regards Reality as a sequence of phases because in this way he seems better able to vindicate its unity. Reality remains ununified when we affirm *Many* aspects in *One* Real. But, if we show how one aspect passes into another aspect, the Unity of Reality remains safe.

3. *Reality is a System of Opposites.* In discovering this alleged law, Hegel thinks that he has put his finger upon the very pulse of Reality. Hegel takes contradiction to be the very movement of the Absolute. The latter contradicts itself by producing the finite, and the finite, urged by the burden of its own contradictions, ultimately returns in thought to the repose of the Absolute.

We may think this a doubtful way of defending the idea of System or of

gradation, but Hegel thinks it to be the most certain way. He thinks it gives him a *living* universe in contrast to a universe of fossil forms. It is only sensuous thought, or subjective thinking, he tells us, which confronts things with each other in hard isolation. Speculative thought sees the differences vanish in a higher synthesis as fast as they emerge. Everything is true in a sense, and everything is false from a higher point of view; and there is no possible way of reaching the higher truth except by the mediation of lower and falser beliefs. Truth is the result reached when we have been tossed from aspect to aspect until we are thrust into the very heart of things.

The working out of the alleged principle of Contradiction in Hegel is quite peculiar. His attitude towards the logical test of Non-Contradiction is rather complex. He neither simply defies it, nor frankly admits it. What he really holds is that, when you discover a Contradiction, you are forced to regard that in which it inheres as an inferior phase of reality, and that you have to pass on to the next higher phase where the contradiction in question disappears. Thus can we legitimize both the phases.

4. *Reality is the work of Thought.* The emphasis laid upon Thought as a guide to the nature of Reality is very modern. Hegel seems to have inherited this assertion from Kant, in particular. In Kant, however, it was burdened with a sceptical gloss. He held that the world of our Knowledge is a creation of Thought; yet he, at the same time, thought that it is the unreal construction of the thoughts of individual men, all working similarly, but none of them attaining truth. Hegel does away with this sceptical interpretation once and for all, and states that Reality is necessarily that

which thought produces, conceives, or apprehends. In this light is to be understood his famous maxim: "The Real is the Rational, and the Rational, the Real." So far, we may be said to have analyzed Hegel's doctrine of Reality. It now only remains for us to see the exact nature of the Unity constituting this Reality. In the light of the above analysis the task does not seem very difficult. In order to determine the nature of the Unity here, the only relevant questions that need be asked are: Is it Identity? Or, is it Harmony? The reply evidently is: Hegel's Absolute is a Harmonious Whole. How this is so and in what sense, we shall try to show in what follows:<sup>1</sup>

According to Hegel, the Absolute is conceived as a differentiated Unity. The individuals form the differentiation. Now, the Unity is *for* each of these individuals. But what about these individuals? Are they also *for* the Unity?

Prima facie, it seems very probable that the individuals are *for* the Unity. But that is wrong. We regard the Unity as being *for* the individuals, because it is found to exist in each of the individuals. Here the word "in" cannot be taken in its ordinary sense of "inclusion". We have next to see whether we can regard the individuals as being *for* the Unity in the same sense. It is evident we cannot. The individuals are *for* the Unity only inasmuch as they are *included* in the Unity.

Again, the Unity as being *for* each of the individuals is something different

from each of them. The individuals, however, cannot be said to be different from the Unity in any way. Hence, they cannot be *for* the Unity.

It may be urged here that the Unity, though different from each of the individuals, is not different from all the individuals taken together. Very well. But the question then would be: Is the Unity equivalent to a mere sum or aggregate of the individuals? Certainly not. The Unity, in other words, is equivalent to the individuals, not as their sum or aggregate, but as they really are. They exist in so far as they form parts of that Real Unity. So, the Unity as being identical with all the individuals together will mean an identity of the contents of both. This would merely imply that the content of the Unity is what it is, identical with itself, not that the individuals are *for* the Unity.

It is an idea only mistakenly cherished by us that the Unity of the System will be greater if the individuals existed *for* that Unity. Of course, each individual is a Unity in one sense of the word. But the sense in which an individual is a unity and the sense in which a System is a Unity are totally distinct. The one—the Unity of the individual—gets all its differentiations from without, the other—the Unity of the System—has nothing outside it to which it can be related, so that it gets all its differentiations from within, from the individuals composing it. Thus there is an important difference in the very nature of the Unity constituting the two. We cannot, therefore, say that as the Unity is *for* the individuals, the individuals also must be *for* the Unity. Now, every Unity is connected with its multiplicity in two ways: either the multiplicity is simply inside the Unity which it differentiates, or, is simply outside that Unity. Merely outside the Unity the

<sup>1</sup> In the analysis of Hegel's doctrine of Reality above put forth and in most of our remarks that will follow hereafter we beg to point out that we have derived very material assistance and guidance from Prof. R. Mackintosh's "Hegel and Hegelianism" as well as from the admirable "Studies in Hegelian Cosmology" by Dr. J. E. McTaggart.

multiplicity can never be. It is, therefore, inside the Unity. But the word "inside" here is ambiguous. It would be best to represent the whole case here in the words of Dr. McTaggart that "the Unity is a *System* of differentiations in the one case"—viz. in the case of the Unity of the whole, and a "*Centre* of differentiations" in the other—viz. in the case of the Unity of each individual. Both the Unities are real, no doubt, but they differ considerably and the difference is quite important. Hegel's Absolute, then, we may say, has the first sort of Unity. The Unity, in other words, is a "Unity of System", not a "Unity of Centre".<sup>2</sup>

That is really the meaning of saying that Hegel's Absolute is a Harmonious Whole. There is a type of harmony in which one side is dependent on the other, a type of harmony which is secur-

<sup>2</sup> This precludes us from regarding the Absolute as necessarily "Personal".

ed by the determined side being always in conformity with the determining side. There is also another type of harmony in which neither side is dependent on the other, a harmony which is due to the fact that it is the essential nature of each to be in harmony with the other. The harmony, then, which is found to characterize the nature of Reality, the Absolute, it is obvious, must be of the latter type. The nature of the whole is not determined by the nature of the individuals, nor is the nature of the individuals determined by the nature of the Whole. The Whole and the individuals are in harmony not because of the action of the one on the other, but because it is the inherent nature of both to be in harmony. Finally, in this harmony between the Whole and the individuals, neither side is subordinate to the other, but the harmony is an immediate and ultimate fact.

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## HIM HAVE I FOUND

By JOHN MOFFIT, JR.

Him have I found, whom I had so long sought,  
 Hopelessly searching through earth's unknown places;  
 Him have I found, whose face outshines all faces,  
 Stilling desire and overwhelming thought!  
 Shorn of His help, I were forever caught  
 In Mâyâ's toils; yet His sole love embraces  
 So much divinity that all her traces  
 Are brushed away, her bondage set at naught!  
 O Ramakrishna! O Compassionate Lord,  
 Now have I known Thee, whom I lacked so long!  
 Withhold no longer then Thy full reward,  
 But grant Thy grace may everywhere abound,  
 That every seeker may burst forth in song:  
 Him have I found at last! Him have I found!

## ECONOMIC SNAPSHOTS

By SHIB CHANDRA DUTT, M.A., B.L.

### INDIA'S TRADE WITH GERMANY

The position of India's trade with Germany appears from the Report for the year 1934-35 of Mr. S. N. Gupta, I.C.S., the Government of India Trade Commissioner at Hamburg.

It appears from that Report that there has been a heavy falling off in the volume of India's imports into Germany. Both in the pre-War and post-War years India sold more to Germany than she bought from her. The opposite tendency appeared for the first time in October—December, 1934, when India bought more from Germany than she sold to her. As a result of compensation trade between the two countries, in the quarter January to March, 1935, the trade between the two countries just balanced. Raw jute is the only commodity with respect to which India enjoys a monopoly. As a result of compensation trade between the two countries, large quantities of raw materials hitherto purchased from India are being purchased from other countries. Germany, we learn from the Report referred to, is now getting 'cotton from Brazil, Peru, Egypt, Turkey, etc., skins chiefly from the Argentine, Brazil, South Africa, Turkey, Spain, Dutch and French India, Mexico, etc., oil seeds from European countries, the Argentine, and the French colonies and so on'.

This tendency to get the raw materials from other countries is, we are told, likely to last a decade. In case she gets accustomed to other sources of supply, India's trade with her with

respect to those commodities, it is feared, will never recover its former position. India's export trade with Germany therefore appears to be in serious danger.

The position of India's trade with the northern European countries in general as pictured in that Report, does not also appear to be bright. The only commodity which shows substantial improvement is raw hides. Except in Sweden which registered an increase of 20 per cent., the position of the jute trade was worse in the other countries. The trades in coir, and coir manufactures, oil seeds, lac, rice, and cotton either fell off or remained stationary.

### RAYON INDUSTRY IN JAPAN

The production of Rayon yarn in Japan during October, 1935, was 17,909,000 lbs., an increase of 418,000 lbs. over that of September.

In the first ten months of 1935 the production of Rayon was 164,058,400 lbs., an increase of 51,310,200 lbs. over that in the same period of 1934.

During the first half of 1936 several new factories are likely to be completed. Hence, during the first three months of 1936 the Companies which are members of the Japanese Rayon Association will maintain their present curtailment of production by 20 p. c.

Japan has an annual output of 100,000 tons of waste cotton, of which 300,000 lakhs are exported to Germany. The Mitsini Company in Japan is contemplating starting a company with a capital of 10 m. yen (£500,000) for the manufacture of Rayon from waste cotton. Such a company would

produce 10 tons of Rayon per day. If new mills started later are sufficient to produce 80 tons per day, all the waste cotton produced in Japan would be consumed within the country.

#### INDIA'S MINING INDUSTRY

At the annual dinner of the Mining and Geological Institute of India at Firpo's Restaurant, Calcutta, Dr. Fox, the new President, referred to the need of conserving India's resources with respect to coal, mica, and manganese. He also referred to the information that can be supplied and assistance rendered by the Geological Department to engineers and industries.

Sir Frank Noyce, member for Industries and Labour, also referred to the need of conservation of India's coal resources. Referring to restriction schemes he said that such schemes whet the appetite for more and that continuance of such schemes tends to create conditions which furnish arguments for more.

Incidentally he referred to certain hopeful features of the industrial situation in India. There has been an increase in the demand for coal. There were more factories working in India in 1934 than ever before. Indian cotton mills, for a few years past, have employed more persons every year and beaten all previous records. Since the contraction of employment began in 1929 the jute mills showed a turn in the opposite direction for the first time in 1934. Mining showed an increase of 11 p. c. in employment in that year. The Soft Coke Cess Committee established new records as regards consumption of soft coke in each of the three years from 1932 to 1934.

#### CINEMA IN GREAT BRITAIN

In 1934 there were 4,305 cinemas in Great Britain. The total amount spent by the British public on cinema that

year was £41 million. This was obtained from the sale of 957 million tickets. In Britain as a whole each cinema catered on an average for 10,000 persons. Seventy per cent of the cinemas seat a thousand persons or less. Apart from the 'shorts', 667 long films totalling a footage of 4,301,000 were shown during the year. British films accounted for 29 per cent of the feet shown. Each British film was shown on an average 7,420 times and each foreign film on an average 6,900 times.

#### ECONOMIC BIHAR

The revenue per thousand of the population is Rs. 1,409 in Bihar and Orissa, as compared with Rs. 2,200 in Bengal, Rs. 4,174 in the Punjab and Rs. 6,600 in Bombay. The expenditure per thousand of the population in those provinces respectively are :—Rs. 1,447, Rs. 2,231, Rs. 4,480, and Rs. 6,669. Agriculturally, Bihar is one of the richest provinces in India. 'Over 60 per cent of the total coal production of British India, 80 per cent of the mica production, almost the entire production of iron ore, and the entire production of copper is from this province.' Its sugar industry is second only to that of the United Provinces. Its population is 38 million, exceeded only by those of Bengal, the United Provinces and Madras. In spite of these all, Bihar is the poorest province in India from the standpoint of her revenue and expenditure. From the figures given above, the economic position of Bengal *vis-a-vis* Bombay and the Punjab may also be compared.

#### SALT MANUFACTURE IN BENGAL

In the year 1934-35 four firms and six persons were granted temporary permits for the manufacture of salt in Bengal.



The Government of India has sanctioned a scheme for the starting of two ware houses, one at Contai in Midnapore and the other at Cox's Bazar in Chittagong. These are meant for the storage of locally manufactured salt until its removal on payment or duty. The one at Contai was started towards the end of the year under review.

During the year in question 1,40,05,861 maunds of salt were imported into Bengal as compared with 1,23,28,620 maunds in the previous year. This represented an increase of 13.60 per cent of the total quantity imported. Calcutta received 93.14 per cent and Chittagong 6.86 per cent. Percentages for the previous year were 92.39 and 7.61 respectively. In 1933-34, 108 vessels entered Calcutta with salt. The figure for 1934-35 was 104.

#### INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH IN GREAT BRITAIN

There are eighteen industrial research associations in Great Britain engaged in researches in one or other of the following industries : Cotton, linen, iron and steel, cast iron, non-ferrous metals and electricity. Of these, thirteen receive pecuniary assistance from the Government. The amount of assistance is decided in the following way : in case an association is able to raise £36,000 the Government renders an assistance of £12,000 per year.

Researches in several industries have been found to be economically well worth paying for. £80,000 spent on electrical research has brought about economies worth £1,000,000 per year. An improved 'cupola' evolved by the Cast Iron Research Association has led to a saving of £200,000 a year. Research in the iron and steel industry has led to a saving of £400,000 a year in the coke used for pig-iron production and approximately £1,500,000 in the production of finished steel. The development

of 'pedigree' flax in Northern Ireland is said to have increased the earnings of growers by £60,000 in the season just ended.

#### JAPAN'S BUDGET, 1936-37

Japan's budget for 1936-37 provides for an expenditure of 2,272,000,000 yen distributed as follows :—

		Yen
Imperial	Household	4,500,000
Foreign	...	31,000,000
Home	...	179,000,000
Finance	...	490,000,000
War	...	508,000,000
Navy	...	551,000,000
Education	...	142,000,000
Justice	...	39,000,000
Agriculture	...	90,000,000
Commerce	...	19,000,000
Communications	...	196,000,000
Overseas	...	19,000,000
Total		2,272,000,000

The revenue is estimated at 2,271,000,000 yen.

The new budget represents an increase of 79 million yen over the current (1935-36) budget of 2,193,400,000 yen, exclusive of two supplementary appropriations.

The new budget represents an increase represents an increase of 87 million yen over the current expenditure of 1,022,700,000 yen.

In 1935-36, the military expenditure is 46.1 per cent of the total national expenditure. In 1936-37, the percentage will increase to 47.

In 1922-23 Japan's military expenditure was 604,000,000 yen and in 1932-33 the figure rose to 648,000,000 yen. In 1936-37, the figure will rise to the record amount of 1,059,000,000 yen.

(We are indebted to the *Statesman* for 7th January, 1936, for the figures quoted here.)

# RAMAKRISHNA AND HIS MISTAKEN ADMIRERS

By SUGATA

One hardly has occasion to meet such a motely crowd of men in one's life time as those with whom Ramakrishna came in contact. Some among them were poles apart in temperament, education, and beliefs. Their appreciations and estimates of him have naturally conformed a good deal to their particular bents, prepossessions, and capacities to understand an uncommon spiritual personality. But some very peculiar deductions about his religious attitude from one or two of his stray remarks unrelated to a thousand others, are apt to bewilder those who can claim only a nodding acquaintance with his life and teachings. Few have had the necessary opportunity and imagination to understand the meaning of his life as a whole and to grasp the versatility of his character. But not a few have had recourse to that short cut to an easy understanding by placing him on the bed of Proeustes and making him fit in with their accepted beliefs. Some have claimed that he was a devotee of God with forms, others have believed that he was a worshipper of God without form or qualities, still others have imagined that he accepted the Motherhood of God without form but with qualities. And, still more amazing, some have muddled further by declaring that Ramakrishna gave up Hinduism with its idol-worship in his later life, as if to imply that Hinduism is idol-worship and offers nothing but idol-worship.

'As many doxies, so many paths' preached Ramakrishna. Yet how is it that such diversities of opinion have come to exist regarding his attitude

towards religion and that some have attempted to pin him down to a particular belief? Ironically enough, the very thing against which he declaimed so much has been attributed to him. It is somewhat surprising, but yet, not altogether. The answer is partly to be found in the universal character of his teachings. The singularity and greatness of Ramakrishna as a teacher lay in the fact that he always came down to the level of his hearers and tried to give them a lift from where they stood. He was always extremely scrupulous in respecting others' feelings. He never sought to impose an alien belief on others, but encouraged them all in their particular faiths and practices. Not only had he premonitions regarding the kind of devotees who would come to him, but his penetrating insight could always unravel their peculiar bents and respective spiritual needs. He had numerous such visions.<sup>1</sup> In the presence of such devotees he would behave as one of their nature. To him religions were only languages, and one must speak to a man in his own language. Swami Vivekananda, the great disciple of Ramakrishna, than whom none can better understand his master, once remarked to Sister Nivedita, when the thought had struck her that religions were merely languages, that Ramakrishna "was the only man who had the courage to say that we must speak

<sup>1</sup> See *Prabuddha Bharata*, January, 1936, Spiritual experiences of Sri Ramakrishna (in his own words).

to all men in their own languages".<sup>2</sup> Moreover Ramakrishna himself says, "I am a believer in forms with those who believe in God with forms, while with those who accept God without form I am a believer in the formless."<sup>3</sup>

The different aspects which Ramakrishna used to wear in the presence of different types of devotees were not the result of a conscious effort. He was, as it were, like a spotless mirror which automatically reflected the ideal of the person who confronted him for the time being, however little that ideal might have been realized by the person in question. Not only that. Even the slightest suggestion, be it a person, place, picture or a mere pronouncement, would often lift him up to the appropriate spiritual planes which those things recalled. Thus one day at the sight of Kedar Chatterji, one of Ramakrishna's devotees, who had taken up in his spiritual practices the loving attitude of the Gopis (the milkmaids of Vrindavan), Ramakrishna became overwhelmed with the feelings of Râdhâ (consort of Krishna) and began to sing addressing Kedar as in a play.<sup>4</sup> The presence of Rakhai (later Swami Brahmananda) would often arouse in him feelings of Yashoda (mother of Krishna).<sup>5</sup> Similarly one day just before Gopal's mother, an aged lady disciple, who worshipped child Krishna as her chosen deity, came into his room, Ramakrishna without even becoming aware of her imminent presence suddenly became possessed with the feelings of child Krishna. Under the stress of that deep emotion his whole body became transfigured into an exact copy

of the metal image of child Krishna, that is commonly met with in a Hindu home or temple.<sup>6</sup> A few moments later the lady came in. Sometimes he would be prey to an overpowering emotion of love and intense yearning for Krishna at the sight of the Jumna.<sup>7</sup> A cross-legged European leaning against a tree would remind him of Krishna, and a picture of Madonna with child Christ in her arms would plunge his being into a deep trance.<sup>8</sup> Even particular days associated with the worship of particular deities and the celebration of particular festivals would throw him into pertinent moods.

The instances cited above will suffice to show that Ramakrishna had an exceptionally rich and flexible personality which was aroused by every conceivable situation capable of summoning up religious emotions and was thrown into a variety of moods according to the circumstances. It is nothing to be wondered at, therefore, if Ramakrishna would sometimes reflect different conceptions of the Divine in the presence of different types of devotees and say that the fourteen span Kâli would dissolve herself into the formless God when he visited the Brâhmos or that he felt no inclination to salute or even to visit Hindu gods when he practised Islam. Hasty generalizations on insufficient data often land oneself in error. And in the case of a personality like Ramakrishna's to jump from a statement or two of the above nature to a definite conclusion that he disdained the worship of God with forms is to court inevitable blunder. If he had really given up the fourteen span Kâli he would not have made Naren (Vivekananda) accept her. Moreover, he had more

<sup>2</sup> *The Master As I saw Him* by Sister Nivedita, 2nd Ed., p. 171.

<sup>3</sup> *Gospel of Ramakrishna* (in Bengali). part III, 8, 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Gospel*, part IV, 1, 4.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid* 1, 8.

<sup>6</sup> *Ramakrishna Lilâprasanga*, Guru-bhâva part II, ch. 7.

<sup>7</sup> *Gospel*, part III, 8, 2.

<sup>8</sup> *Lilâprasanga*, Sâdhaka-bhâva II, ch. 21.

than once told Keshab that the Brahman (the unqualified Absolute) and Sakti (the Primal Energy) are one and that God is both with and without forms and much more else beyond.<sup>9</sup> And Ramakrishna claims that Keshab accepted his remarks.<sup>10</sup> Though he advised some of his listeners to accept as much as they could digest he also warned them against the tendency to dogmatize on the finality of the Divine.<sup>11</sup> "No one should say about God that He is this,"<sup>12</sup> said he. The fact that Ramakrishna suited his teachings to the demands of changing occasions made it easy for those who occasionally saw him to misunderstand him. But if one took pains to watch him closely on a number of occasions and under different circumstances, one would have realized that Ramakrishna was much more than the preacher of a particular "ism". It is a common knowledge with the students of Ramakrishna's life that men of divergent beliefs imagined that he was a man after their own patterns.<sup>13</sup> Gangamayi, a woman worshipper of Radha, whom Ramakrishna met in Vrindaban in the course of his travels to holy places, looked upon the latter as an incarnation of Râdhâ.<sup>14</sup> Gopal's mother looked upon him as her chosen deity.<sup>15</sup> Considering how even some among those who saw him during a fairly long time came to believe that Ramakrishna laid special emphasis on particular ideals and paths it is easy to understand how those who saw him only a few times have been misled into

partial generalizations, contrary to the essence of Ramakrishna's message. Such pitfalls might, however, have been easily avoided by a little more open-minded and keener observation. Indeed Keshab and a few of his closer associates who had opportunity to see Ramakrishna on a number of occasions came to appreciate the versatility of his character. Pratap Chandra Mazumdar, the most brilliant of Keshab's associates and the latter's right-handed man, neatly summed up the varied aspects of Ramakrishna's personality in an illuminating article contributed to the Theistic Quarterly Review. He wrote: "What is his religion? It is orthodox Hinduism, but Hinduism of a strange type. Ramakrishna Paramahansa (for that is the name of the saint) is the worshipper of no particular Hindu God. He is not a Shivite, he is not a Shakta, he is not a Vaishnava, he is not a Vedântist. Yet he is *all these*. He worships Shiva, he worships Kâli, he worships Râma, he worships Krishna, and is a confirmed advocate of Vedântic doctrines . . . He is an idolator, yet is a faithful and most devoted meditator of the perfections of the one formless, infinite Deity whom he terms Akhanda Sachchidânanda (Indivisible Existence Knowledge Bliss). To him each of these deities is a force, an incarnated principle tending to reveal the supreme relation of the soul to that eternal and formless Being who is unchangeable in His blessedness and light of wisdom. . . . These incarnations, he says, are but the forces (Shakti) and dispensations (Lîlâ) of the eternally wise and blessed Akhanda Sachchidânanda who can never be changed or formulated, who is one endless and everlasting ocean of light, truth and joy."<sup>16</sup>

It is needless to point out that the suggestion that Ramakrishna gave up a

<sup>9</sup> Gospel I, 6, 2 ; 2, 4. *Lîlâprasanga*, Divya-bhâva, ch. I.

<sup>10</sup> Gospel I, 6, 2.

<sup>11</sup> *Lîlâprasanga*, Divya-bhâva, ch. I.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Lîlâprasanga*, Guru-bhâva part II, ch. 9.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 8.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 7.

<sup>16</sup> *Theistic Quarterly Review*, October, 1879.

particular faith for another is as preposterous as it is ridiculous. The man who successfully practised the major religions, trod the various paths and by-paths of mystic realization and attested to the truth of all, need subscribe to no particular faith. The limited horizon of a circumscribed faith is too narrow to encage such a spirit. It is too naïve to tie a man who had reached the acme of Advaitic realization to a faith in the formless Personal God or any other conception of God which are grossly anthropomorphic parodies of the Reality from the transcendental standpoint. He is too big for any partisan labelling.

If he stoops on occasions to the different levels of his hearers to hearten them in their spiritual endeavours it is because he sees that all streams, after all, wend their way to the same ocean. Differences among faiths and varying conceptions of the Divine are real, irreconcil-

able contradictions to persons with whom religion is merely a showy Japanese vase in their intellectual drawing-room. Expression of a particular opinion is a dogma which necessarily shuts out all others. Specially in a case like Ramakrishna's misconceptions easily arise from piecemeal views.

Rightly has Swami Vivekananda, his illustrious disciple, said: "One of his own utterances is that those who have seen the chameleon only once, know only one colour of the animal, but those who have lived under the tree, know all the colours that it puts on. For this reason, no utterance of Sri Ramakrishna can be accepted as authentic, unless it is verified by those who constantly lived with him and whom he brought up to fulfil his life's mission."<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> See *Prabuddha Bharata*, February, 1936.

## THE CASTE SYSTEM IN INDIA

BY SWAMI VIVIDISHANANDA

The caste system in India is one of the most complicated institutions and is, in one way, synonymous with the whole Hindu social organization. In order to understand the meaning, purpose, and working of this institution, one has to be familiar with the history, the cultural traditions, and the ideals of the Hindu race.

The Hindus belong to that stock of the Aryan family, called the Indo-Aryans, who must have left their original home in Central Asia and migrated to India in pre-historic times. As such, they have a kinship of blood with the different European nations, although their skins have received a dark coat of

brown by living under the tropical sun for thousands of years.

The system of castes must have originated at that distant date of the early settlement of the Indo-Aryans in India. It came into being as a necessity. In the beginning it was simple. But later on, on account of the peculiar environmental conditions, it became complex, as happens with every institution in every country.

From the evidence at our disposal, we think that this caste system was occupational in its origin. It was a case of division of labour.

When the Indo-Aryans first settled in India, they found themselves confronted with many problems. They came to a

new country with new climatic, social and political conditions. Naturally, while adjusting themselves, they had to reorganize their life in many ways. The caste system was one of such efforts.

In the first place, realizing the necessity for a better and more efficient working of their social organization, they divided themselves into classes and followed occupations, according to individual inclinations and qualifications. Secondly, the question of their relationship with the original inhabitants—the uncivilized and half-civilized races whom they conquered, was equally important. As they had to live with them from day to day in the same land, they could not altogether ignore them. So they thought that the best humane method of dealing with them would be to assimilate them cautiously and intelligently by education. In this way, the original inhabitants also, according to their cultural status and natural tendencies, found their rightful place in the social organization. Of course, this process of assimilation had to be a very slow and gradual one.

This is, in brief, the genesis of the caste system. It was something like a grouping of the entire population of India into several classes with duties and responsibilities allotted to each. The main divisions of this system were the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaisyas and the Sudras, corresponding respectively to the priest class, the royal and military class, the agriculturist and merchant class, and the working class of modern times.

The Sanskrit word for "caste" is "Varna" which means "colour". If the word "colour" is taken literally, the caste system would then be a division of the people according to the complexion of their skin. In support of this theory, we find passages in the

ancient books which describe the Brahmins—the first caste as white, the Kshatriyas—the second caste as red, the Vaisyas—the third caste as yellow, and the Sudras—the fourth caste as black. Thus the four divisions, according to this interpretation, would cover and represent the four main races of the world—the Aryans, the American Indian, the Mongolians, and the Negroes. To my understanding, this interpretation is too far-fetched and goes against facts. As we do not notice much difference of complexion amongst the members of the different castes in India, "colour" must be taken symbolically to represent the nature of their occupation.

The white colour of the Brahmins refers to the purity of their occupation, the red colour of the Kshatriyas to the bloody nature of their profession as soldiers, the yellow colour of the Vaisyas to the colour of gold or of the ripe corn they dealt in, and the black colour of the Sudras to the menial nature of their work.

The members of the first caste were the spiritual leaders, and they devoted themselves to the study and teaching of the different branches of science and philosophy and to the performance of the religious rites of the people. The second caste supplied the rulers and warriors who maintained peace and order and protected the country from foreign aggression. The trades, industries and agriculture were managed by the third caste. The fourth caste attended to the service of the people.

In course of time, these four main divisions of castes gave rise to many more subdivisions, and they were formed on the same principle of the distribution of work in accordance with the individuals' natural tendencies and qualifications. In this way, to every person were given his place, rank and

remuneration, avoiding unnecessary competition.

We must note here a fact which is very significant. Like the ancient Jewish community, which made God their sovereign and religion their law, the Hindu society was built upon spiritual foundations. Every effort of every unit of the body-politic must be directed in such a way that it might lead, in the long run, to spiritual illumination and freedom. That was the dictum of the ancient law-givers and leaders. In the hierarchy of castes, although every caste was important in its own place, the Brahmins commanded the greatest respect because they were the custodians and teachers of spiritual wisdom. Greater was, therefore, their responsibility. Theirs was to be a life of continual consecration, sacrifice, and service. They had to excel in truthfulness and justice, purity and austerity, self-restraint and self-denial, love and service, intuition and knowledge of God. The other three castes imitated the examples of the Brahmins.

In the beginning, the castes were elastic and interchangeable. The social distinctions were not rigid and strictly binding. Nor were the occupations and professions hereditary. We have ample evidence and shall quote an eminent Hindu scholar for our support on this matter. He writes :

“We read in the *Vedas* and other ancient writers of the Hindus that the Brahmins could intermarry with the Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras. They could also become warriors if they were so qualified; while the Kshatriyas often became the teachers of the Brahmins; in fact, most of the philosophical and spiritual ideals which we have today were first given by the Kshatriyas, and not by the Brahmins. The members of these classes mixed freely, and whenever any one had the qualifications of

a Brahmin or a Kshatriya he was called Brahmin or Kshatriya. There were many Kshatriyas who were afterwards called Brahmins on account of their spiritual wisdom and greatness. You will notice that almost all the incarnations of Divinity in India were Kshatriyas, and very few were Brahmins.”

With the process of time, this institution of castes lost its flexible character and became hereditary and set. Instead of being a means of all-round growth and self-expression for the members, it became a machinery for self-aggrandizement in the hands of the leaders. Qualifications and natural tendencies were lost sight of. Birth alone became a passport to rights and advantages. Reform was badly needed.

In all fairness, it must be said that those ancient thinkers and leaders who started this idea of making the castes hereditary, were well-meaning. They knew the laws of heredity and wanted to develop the best qualities through hereditary transmission and perfect the different lines of work. If a family follows a particular trade from generation to generation, it cannot but acquire an exceptional proficiency along that line. That was what they also wanted. For a long time the castes became something like hereditary trade guilds and did incalculable good to the people. But later on when this question of “high and low”, of rights and privileges, came to the forefront, it defeated its original purpose.

During the sixth century B.C. Buddha, the Enlightened One and the great reformer, came and set the Hindu society in order. He dealt a death-blow to the priestly power and levelled all artificial and unnecessary distinctions of castes. He would not recognize a Brahmin because he was born as such. He alone could be called a Brahmin who would possess the moral and spiri-

tual qualities of a Brahmin. During Buddhistic supremacy, which covered a period of about a thousand years, the caste system assumed and functioned in its ancient simple form, and the people of the different classes enjoyed social and political freedom.

About six hundred A.D. Buddhism declined bringing in its train corruption, necessitating a reorganization of the people. The Hindu orthodoxy got control of affairs and reinstated the old, hereditary system of castes with its conservative rigour. Perhaps that was the best thing they could do under the circumstances.

This conservatism was at once the strength as well as the weakness of the Hindu society. It saved it from total disintegration and preserved the Aryan blood and literature from the destructive forces of the successive invaders like the Greeks, Seythians, Tartars, Mohammedans, and others. It created certain impregnable social barriers which the invading hordes could not break through.

But this conservatism, again, weakened appreciably its physical vitality. Through indiscretion, the social leaders followed a policy of extreme seclusion and isolation, excommunicating those of their own brothers who would associate closely with the foreigners, in that way losing a huge number from their own fold. The subsequent history of the Hindu social organization and its system of castes is practically a repetition of the same story with occasional attempts at reformation.

The Hindu society with its castes is at present passing through a period of transition. Interested parties will perhaps point out "untouchability" and many other real or imaginary imperfections it has. We confess "untouchability" is a great blot, and no sensible Hindu would be proud of it. As the untouchables represent remnants of some of the most uncivilized aboriginal races of India and are extremely unsanitary in their habits, they could not be taken in without detriment and harm to the society. They had to be segregated, and certainly segregation is better and more humane than extermination that has been practised in other parts of the world.

The Hindu society has its imperfections, and for that matter every institution has its imperfections. But we must not forget that the Hindu society is very very old. It served its purpose in saving the nation from ruin many times in the past. It is undergoing the necessary process of purification and will rise equal to the occasion, and bring happiness and freedom to the people.

Impartial observers will admit that the same intolerance, love of power, selfishness, jealousy, and license in the name of freedom are reigning supreme all over the world. In India as everywhere else the remedy lies in intelligent reformation through education. This reformation must come from within and must not be imposed from outside. It should be slow and gradual evolution and not revolution.

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# KARMA AND ITS FRUIT

BY BRIJ LAL SHARMA

It is generally known that every action is followed by its fruit. It is forgotten that every action is also *accompanied* by its fruit.

The consequences of human actions are worked out in two different worlds, the objective and the subjective, in the sphere of time, space, and causation, and in the internal region of thought, feeling, and will. In the first case, the doer becomes recipient of social reactions to his action; in the latter case, the change is registered in his personality. An act to be moral must have an external result and an internal intent—external result, because morality has a meaning only in a crowd, in a system of human relationships, where multifold needs have to be admitted and reconciled; internal intent, because without it the act would be indistinguishable from natural action, responsibility being impossible without freedom.

In the objective world the consequences are successive. They follow the deed, which must take time to unfold. Society is a complex network of rights and duties, and any interference with it, at any point, must pulsate through its entire structure, slowly but unavoidably, down the length of time. When a man plays ducks and drakes with public money, he is selfish and uncharitable, his actions bear fruit in others' life through many months and years. Men and women suffer at his hands. Some of the consequences may not be exhausted even in hundreds and thousands of years. A major part of our difficulties today, throughout the world, political, economic, religious, social or moral, has been bequeathed

to us by past generations. Since society is organic and we are members of one another, the sins of fathers are visited on the heads of their children, and posterity will reap the harvest of the dragon's teeth, which we are sowing today, as surely as we are being convulsed by the evil actions of our ancestors.

In the subjective world things are quite different. There consequences are not successive but immediate. The result does not follow the deed but accompanies it. Cause and effect are co-existent. We are what we behold. The very appearance of a good idea, motive, or feeling is its own reward, the very appearance of an evil one its own curse. The mind does not merely contemplate, it does what it contemplates, since contemplation is doing. The thinker is the actor because he is thinking, which is an act. To entertain an idea is subjectively to live up to it that very moment. There is no waiting here, the reward or punishment is immediate. We become what we think and feel.

Certain qualifications are necessary. Every idea, feeling or urge that appears in the mind is closely related to the past history of the mind. While, therefore, its appearance immediately colours the mind, this appearance itself is a result of the constitution of the mind. Just as the actions of past generations make present-day society what it is, even so our own mind largely is what we have put into it in the past. Considered thus the idea which modifies the mind is successive. Similarly objective consequences are not wholly successive. Directly a good or

evil deed is done by an individual, the society is affected inasmuch as the individual is a part of society. A noble heart immediately, to the extent of himself, ennobles society.

Subjective consequences of an act may be successive in another way. Regret, remorse, sorrow (or their opposite as the case may be) may follow an action. As reflection plays over what has been done, as its probable effects are pictured and its ramifications traced from their source to their end, the mind may become a theatre of a swiftly-moving pageant of complex mental states, each with its own idea, emotion and attitude. All these are consequences of the action done. There is, however, a difference. These consequences are thrown into sharp relief by thought, which does so by objectifying them. But for the intervention of reason, they would not be successive. We perceive them *as if* they were actually taking place in the external world. The subsequent emergence of reason and its inquiry are intelligible only if we understand that at the time of the performance of the action reason was not consulted. The deed was unsupported by our thought and will and was impulsive, for if before it was done its results had been forecast, it may not have been done.

In an impulse only a part of the mind is expressed, a part which has for a moment invaded the rest of the mind in its blind search of satisfaction. When satisfaction is obtained, the impulse loses its force and the suppressed parts recover their activity, thus producing a contrast between what has been done and what should have been done. The mind is being judged by itself. Although even here the impulse and its realization only express the character of the mind, the mind as at this moment it is, and therefore in a

sense co-existent with it, they are, strictly speaking, successive.

We thus discover a principle which may be stated as follows: Subjective consequences of a moral act are immediate when it is, before its performance, supported by reason, successive when it is, after it is performed, criticized by it.

All this has an important bearing on the theory of Karma. Spiritual life may not be a life of complete reason, but it is certainly not a life without it. Karma would have us come again and again into the world to reap the harvest of our past actions on the analogy of the theory of cause and effect which rule the universe. But man is not simply a conglomeration of causes and effects, antecedents and consequences, although there are aspects of him to which they are relevant. The real reward and punishment are immediate. What is successive is merely their interpretation in terms of objective factors, namely, social relations. When, in defiance of reason, scorning consequences, I deliberately do something whose results are sure to be reprehensible, I have that very moment put the light out in my soul. The subsequent punishment, however severe and exacting, cannot make that darkness any more darker. The punishment itself is physical and, imposed as it is from without, is nothing as compared with the self-imposed punishment of mental night. It is an attempt at self-extinction, a betrayal of our inmost nature.

The same thing may be expressed in another manner. Every moral act has personal and social consequences. Personal consequences are immediate, social consequences successive. Rebirth is meaningless to the first, for the results have been enjoyed, and is equally meaningless for the second, since they are social. The distinction must not be

overemphasized, for the individual is one with society. In the consciousness of immediate subjective results the individual is conscious of himself as the very life and soul of society or of his attempt to extinguish it. The indivi-

dual in us cannot experience the social consequences after our death, but the universal in us, which objectively is crystallized in social institutions and creative forces and subjectively in our gregarious instinct, continues to.

## ATMABODHA

BY SWAMI SIDDHATMANANDA

नानोपाधिवशादेव जातिनामाश्रमादयः ।

आत्मन्यारोपितास्तोये रसवर्णादिभेदवत् ॥ ११ ॥

तोये रसवर्णादिभेदवत् Like tastes, colours, etc. which are attributed to water (due to its contact with various things, but which in fact is tasteless and colourless) जाति-नाम-आश्रमादयः caste, name, stage of life, etc. नाना उपधिवशात् due to various limiting adjuncts एव only आत्मनि the Self आरोपिता superimposed.

11. As different tastes, colours, etc. are attributed to water (due to its contact with various things, but which in fact is tasteless, colourless, etc.), similarly, due to limiting adjuncts alone, caste, name, order of life etc. are superimposed on the Self (which is none of these in reality).

The Ātman according to Vedānta-texts is beyond name and form, and beyond all distinctions like Brāhmana and Kshatriya or Brahmachârin, householder, recluse, and Sannyâsin. The ideas, I am so-and-so, I am a Brāhmana or a Kshatriya, I am a Brahmachâri etc., therefore, are due to the fact that on the Self, due to its identification with the body, are superimposed these conditions—name, caste, stage of life, etc. which in fact are attributes of the body and not of the Ātman.

पञ्चीकृतमहाभूतसम्भवं कर्मसंचितम् ।

शरीरं सुखदुःखानां भोगायतनमुच्यते ॥ १२ ॥

पञ्चीकृतमहाभूतसम्भवं Evolved out of the fivefold compounded rudimentary elements कर्मसंचितम् generated by Karma शरीरम् the physical body सुखदुःखानाम् of happiness and misery भोगायतनम् the abode of enjoyment उच्यते is said to be.

12. The physical body evolved out of the compounded rudimentary elements and generated by (past) Karma, is said to be the abode of experience of happiness and misery.

The five rudimentary elements are the sky, air, fire, water, and earth. These get compounded in a fivefold manner and produce the five gross elements. The process is as follows: Each of the subtle elements is divided into two parts. One of the two halves is further divided into four parts. Then each gross element is formed by the combination of one-half of itself with one-eighth of each of the other four elements in the subtle condition. In other words gross sky is formed as follows: subtle sky  $1/2 + 1/8$  of the other four elements. Similarly are the other gross elements produced. Out of the gross elements this universe of diverse forms is produced.

पंचप्राणमनोबुद्धिदशेन्द्रियसमन्वितम् ।

अपञ्चीकृतभूतार्थं सूक्ष्माङ्गं भोगसाधनम् ॥ १३ ॥

पंचप्राण-मनः-बुद्धिः-दशेन्द्रिय-समन्वितम् Consisting of the five Prānas, mind, intellect and the ten senses सूक्ष्माङ्गं 'the subtle body' अपञ्चीकृतभूतार्थं 'which has arisen out of the uncompounded elements, i. e. from the five subtle elements' भोगसाधनम् is the instrument of enjoyment.

13. The subtle body consisting of the five Pranas<sup>1</sup>, mind<sup>2</sup>, intellect<sup>3</sup> and the ten senses, and which is produced out of the five rudimentary elements, is the instrument of enjoyment.

<sup>1</sup> The five Prānas—They are Prāna, Apāna, Vyāna, Udāna and Samāna. These five Prānas or vital forces have different functions in the body. Prāna is that vital force which moves upward ; Apāna moves downward ; Vyāna moves in all directions and pervades the entire body ; Udāna helps the passing of the soul out of the body and Samāna is the vital force which assimilates food and drink.

<sup>2</sup> Mind—It is that modification of the internal organ (Antahkarana) which considers the pros and cons of a subject.

<sup>3</sup> Intellect—It is that modification of the internal organ which determines.

अनाद्यविद्याऽनिर्वाच्या कारणोपाधिरुच्यते ।

उपाधित्रितयादन्यमात्मानमवधारयेत् ॥ १४ ॥

अनादि Beginningless, अनिर्वाच्या indescribable अविद्या ignorance कारणोपाधि उच्यते is called the causal adjunct ( of the Self ) उपाधित्रितयान् अन्वम् different from these three limiting adjuncts अक्षानम् the Ātman अवधारयेत् ( One ' should know.

14. Ignorance ( Avidyā ) which is beginningless and indescribable<sup>1</sup> is the causal adjunct<sup>2</sup> (of the Self). One should know the Self as different from the three limiting adjuncts.

<sup>1</sup> Indescribable—Ignorance cannot be described either as real or unreal. We cannot say it is real for it disappears on the awakening of knowledge. Nor can we say it is unreal for we experience it and without it there would not be any dealing with the world. Therefore it is indescribable (Anirvachaniya).

<sup>2</sup> Causal adjunct—Ignorance associated with the Self is called the causal body on account of its being the cause of egoism. As such it is the causal adjunct (Upādhi) of the Self. The Self, however, is different from these three adjuncts, viz. the gross, subtle, and the causal bodies which are superimposed on it.

पञ्चकोशादियोगेन तत्तन्मय इव स्थितः ।

शुद्धात्मा नीलवस्त्रादियोगेन स्फटिको यथा ॥ १५ ॥

यथा Just as नीलवस्त्रादियोगेन due to coming in contact with a cloth coloured blue etc. स्फटिकः crystal ( तथा so ) शुद्धात्मा the pure Self पञ्चकोशादियोगेन due to its contact with the five sheaths तत्तन्मय इव स्थितः appears to be of the nature of one or other of these sheaths.

15. Just as a colourless crystal coming in contact with a cloth blue etc. in colour appears to be blue etc., similarly, the pure Self by its contact with the five sheaths, appears to be of the nature of one or other of these sheaths.

<sup>1</sup> The five sheaths—They are, Ānandamaya, Vijnānamaya, Manomaya, Prānamaya, and Annamaya. Ignorance associated with the Self is called the Ānandamayakosha or the blissful sheath as it is full of bliss and because it covers the Self like a sheath. The

intellect together with the organs of perception constitutes the Vijnānamayakosha or the intelligent sheath of the Self. The mind with the organs of perception constitutes the Manomayakosha or the mental sheath of the Self. The five Prānas together with the organs of action constitutes the Prānamayakosha or the vital sheath of the Self. The gross body constitutes the Annamayakosha of the Self. The first sheath comprises the causal body, the next three constitute the subtle body, and the last sheath constitutes the gross body. The Ātman, however, is beyond all these.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

In *The Need of a New Adjustment* the reconciliation of the conflicting tendencies of our time has been sought in an active principle of synthesis between economism and religion, science and philosophy, philosophy and life, and the orient and the occident. . . . Dr. Helmuth Von Glasenapp is a great lover of India and Indian Culture. In the present article he shows how all religions essentially point to the same goal and how the spirit of all religions was embodied in the life of Sri Ramakrishna. . . . Dr. Taraknath Das while reviewing the books by Dr. Everett Dean Martin and René Fülöp Miller, published in 1935 points out in *Evolution of Modern Civilization and Failure of Revolutions*, the synthesis between evolution and revolution in human progress which has not yet come to an definite form but is, in a state of constant flux. . . . Mrs. Donald Davidson is a new contributor of ours. She gives in her article her first-hand knowledge about the Vedanta movement in U. S. A. . . . Mr. Drupad S. Desai dwells in a nutshell upon the fundamental ideas of Hegel, so far as the nature of the Absolute is concerned. His presentation is very simple and clear even to an average reader. . . . Mr. Shib Chandra Dutt in his article on *Economic Snapshots* shows the present position of India's trade with some European countries.

. . . The writer of *Ramakrishna and his Mistaken Admirers* draws our attention to the misconceptions about Ramakrishna's faith and religious attitude that arise out of piecemeal views. . . . *The Caste system in India* by Swami Vividishananda is one of his radio talks that were broadcasted some months ago in the United States of America. . . . Mr. Brij Lal Sharma shows in *Karma and its Fruit* how the consequences of human actions are worked out in the subjective and objective worlds.

### SHOULD REASON RETREAT BEFORE UNREASON

The past generation grew up in an intellectual atmosphere which was remarkable for its firm faith in the power of reason. Reason was held to be the panacea for all the ills from which mankind suffered. Even if men did not always act according to it, it was nevertheless fondly cherished that in no distant future it would be the chief determinant of human action. And today! It no longer claims to speak from the heights of Olympus. Having come to recognize its inability to comprehend Reality in its entirety, it is content by limiting itself to the humbler task of dealing with its abstractions. Nor can it ever pretend to become the principal motive of human behaviour as it has been shown to be a mere log floating helplessly on the surging tides of deep

desires. More than that. Men in growing number are consciously repudiating its voice.

Looking at the irrational and elemental forces that are dominating the political philosophies and actions of the totalitarian states, Rene Füllöp Miller, a noted Austrian thinker and writer, in an article contributed to the *Hibbert Journal*, January, 1936, finds them not isolated and strange phenomena but the reflections of the philosophical and scientific convictions of the time. He shows that "the exact sciences, philosophy and psychology as well, have been compelled to abandon the assumption that all the phenomena of the world and of human thought are explicable in the terms of reason". He does not regard this general revolt against reason as something novel in history. He points out that such periodical conflicts between the forces of reason and unreason have characterized civilized history since its very beginning. From these premises Miller concludes that irrationalism is rather "a basic factor of human consciousness and of human knowledge in general". Such lessons, however, do not signify the complete abdication of reason. "What they teach, is not the renunciation of rational insight, but merely a restriction of the domain within which the dicta of reason" appear to be fully valid. He believes that this conflict between reason and unreason "will ultimately lead to a synthesis between rationalism and irrationalism, to a middle principle of practical application".

It is true that reason has its limitations within which its workings are valid. But when his thesis halts by merely pointing to a synthesis between the rational and the irrational a grave danger inevitably lurks there. Nor is it right to say as he does that "Christianity, especially in its beginnings" is

"a most highly emphasized form of irrationalism"; or to imply that Christian mysticism was a manifestation of irrationalism. In these cases the term irrationalism seems to have undergone a radical and unjustifiable change of content. Genuine religious or mystic experience is not irrational; it is supra-rational. When the mystics discard the aid of discursive reason in search of Reality it is not because they dispense with it in their ordinary lives, but because the supreme illumination is beyond the realm of all cognitive ideas. Mystic experience transcends, but does not contradict, reason. If irrational elements have found their way into theology, it is no fault of the mystics as such. We need, therefore, to make a sharp distinction between the supra-rational and the irrational.

Again any unqualified statement about the synthesis of reason and unreason is not only misleading but also highly dangerous. It does not carve out the respective spheres of the both. It seems to justify in advance any and every elemental outburst. Nor is it true that we should submit to a diarchy of reason and unreason. The problem is to find out the kingdom within which reason should reign supreme. The deeper beliefs of our life spring not from reason but from our instincts, feelings, and aspirations. Reason does not create the higher and fundamental values. They are discovered through intuition. Miller is not quite correct when he acclaims democracy, socialism, and brotherhood of man as products of reason. Did not the ancients speak of an age in which there were no inequality, no distinction, no property, and no government? Did not the greatest champion of reason in ancient Europe accept slavery as a necessary institution? Was not a selfish individualism preached by the Philosophical Radicals

who swore by reason. What nobler conceptions of brotherhood and democracy than those preached by Christianity and Buddhism have been given by reason? Reason has to accept the higher values from other sources. And upon this basis it is to reign supreme in our lives. But on no ground should it give way to irrationalism. Reason has to accept beliefs and motives not only in the light of its knowledge of the world and the universe but also in accordance with the promptings of the higher nature of man.

### A TWO-STOREYED BUILDING WITHOUT A STAIRCASE

The inaugural address of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore at the first conference of the New Educational Fellowship, Bengal Section, organized under the auspices of the Bengal Educational Week deserves careful attention of all Indians for more than one reason. He has compared the existing structure of education to a double-storeyed building in which the architect has omitted to connect the upper and lower floors with a stairway. It is nothing short of a calamity that only ten per cent of the Indian people have a thin veneer of education, while the mass of the people who bear the burden of the upper storey have no opportunity to avail of it. The consequent moral separation between the two sections of the people has been greater than that between race and race. The state of affairs is put down to lack of funds. But no modern nation has dared to endanger its solidarity on such a plea. National unification is a chimera without a uniformity of education. This serious plight of education in present-day India has been traced alike to the apathy of its ruler and its failure to acclimatize in Indian soil the plant of knowledge brought from the West. A slavish imitation of the West has made us asso-

ciate decent education with respectable buildings. If "funds do not permit of making the swords of better material than wood," is it not "a waste of money to make the scabbard of steel"?

The poet has pointed out the fact, too often unrealized, that India had her indigenous system of education which did not starve the masses from the fruits of knowledge that the upper classes enjoyed. The old education was a living process which vivified the mass mind as the present scientific knowledge does not. From the pundits to the masses all fed upon the same ideas and ideals. It might be that most of them could not sign their names. But knowledge has not always to clothe itself in the letters of an alphabet to be received by the mass mind. The present unintelligent enforcement of Western methods and values has restricted the flow of knowledge still more than would have been the case even with the limited funds at disposal. We have receded "further and further from the simple solutions of the problem of the life arrived at by our ancestors". As an example of ancient living universities, the poet cites the instance of Kashi "where the roots of ancient culture are still living, though it has no college buildings, no expensive or elaborate administrative machinery". All these anomalies and failures to assimilate the new knowledge he puts down to the fact that education has so far been imparted to us in a language other than our own. This has not only barred the doors of a higher education to many students but also has crippled the thinking and imagination of a vast majority. Finally he put in a strong plea for the vernacularization of the medium of instruction from top to bottom.

There is not the least doubt today that the ancient dispute between the *Anglicists* and the *Orientalists* of the last

century was a mock fight.. For the introduction of English education was a foregone conclusion with the rulers for reasons now well-known to all. Accordingly some have entirely mis-spent their vim and energy in eulogizing or condemning some of our compatriots. Benefits of English Education nobody can deny. But they have come inspite of it. And they would have come more easily or more quickly had the medium of instruction been more the vernacular of the country. Just witness how a Tagore could nourish his mind into adolescence more than sixty years ago purely on a Bengali diet of knowledge. There can be no opinion to the contrary that a foreign language has been and is producing generations of intellectual cripples. It is never too late to mend.

### SEX-REPRESSION

Man has always believed in oracles. Only, in the past the prophetic voice was heard at Delphi or such other lonely spots. But today man in the street hears the command of Pythia wherever a scientist wags his tongue in vindication of certain pet-dogma of his own with some show of observational and experimental methods. Religion has always been blamed as the sole breeder of dogmas. But the majority of scientists till the recent day have not been above the same failing. One of the most vicious dogmas, which the last century brought into existence and which still continues to sway the general belief for the popular mind is always years behind new discoveries - is the Freudian spectre of an all-powerful *libido* which haunts man amid all his activities through the entire span of his life from babyhood to death. It has influenced current thought and literature to such an extent as to incline common men who can just spell psycho-analysis to let off steam through the

safety-valve too often with the conscience of a Sir Galahad. Even thoughtful persons who have come to realize the value of religious and mystic experience have unconsciously given away to the same sinister influence. Many of them have expressed the belief that sex-repression is unnecessary for the highest spiritual life and that man should satisfy his sexual impulse as he satisfies hunger and thirst, and that the repression of the sexual appetite leads to abnormality. In vain you appeal to the great religious teachers who renounced sex. They are all dismissed with a sopient, wavy flourish of the hand. A sort of monkeying with truth has begun. One hears such lofty nonsense as the full development of personality, all-round spiritual unfoldment, realizing the divine in and through the mundane and so on.

But little does common man know that the scientists of today are in a more chastened mood. But what is more, many leading men of science have shattered the Freudian dogma to pieces. It is interesting to learn in this connection the views of no less a man than Alex Carrel, an eminent surgeon, scientist, and winner of the Nobel Prize in 1912, on the matter. He is of opinion that "Freud has done more harm than the most extreme mechanicians." (Man, the unknown, pp. 281). He points out that the Freudian generalization is faulty being based on insufficient and one-sided data, and that contrary to common belief, the repression of the sexual appetite by a healthy man makes him stronger and stronger. "It is well known," he says "that sexual excesses impede intellectual activity. In order to reach its full power, intelligence seems to require both the presence of well-developed sexual glands and the temporary repression of the sexual appetite. Freud has rightly emphasized



the capital importance of sexual impulses in the activities of consciousness. His conclusions should not be generalized to include normal individuals specially those who are endowed with a strong nervous system and mastery over themselves. While the weak, the nervous and the unbalanced become more abnormal when the sexual appetites are repressed, the strong are rendered still stronger by practising such a form of asceticism." (*Ibid* 143 p.).

#### SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND ON RAMAKRISHNA

Sir Francis is well-known in India and England. A great believer in religion and mysticism he has taken pains to study the lives of saints and mystics in ancient and modern times. He is thus entitled to speak with some

authority on religious topics and persons. In course of a speech, delivered at a meeting of the Indian Progressive Writers' Association in London, Sir Francis pointed out certain advantages which India enjoyed over England from the point of view of religious dramas and added, "I think you have had the greatest religious leader ever born in the world. He was Sri Ramakrishna. He was a great dramatist, of acting rather than entering into the spirit of those he wanted to reach. He became a Christian to enter into the spirit of Christ, similarly he became a Muslim to enter into the spirit of Muslim God." It is refreshing to learn how an intelligent westerner has truly felt the greatness of Ramakrishna as a teacher, when not a few of his compatriots have missed the great teacher's spirit.

### REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**THE GREAT PASSING ON.** By Edmond Holmes. Published by Rider & Co. Paternoster House, E.C., London. Price 5/- net.

Does man survive after death? The question has continued to trouble man since he began to ponder on life. Numerous answers have been given but they have failed to satisfy him permanently. Yet it is a most vital question with us. For, to have a correct outlook on life we must have a right outlook on death. A rigid agnosticism which limits man's faith to the narrow world of matter cannot last long without in the end leading to his moral and spiritual debasement. If man is to avoid such a catastrophe he has had to change his outlook on death. Can it be reasonably done? Edmond Holmes, a well known writer on religious and philosophical subjects, believes it can be done on the evidence supplied by spiritualism. He appears to be convinced that the reliable data of spiritualism help to construct a positive faith in personal survival with all its important implications.

In the first part of the work the author presents the case for the supernormal. He

begins by defining the meaning and content of Reality. The varieties of experience of psychics, mystics, and occultists establish, according to him, that there are gradations in Reality. The commonsense reality and its contrary are not "mutually exclusive alternatives but correlated opposites, antithetical poles of a process which is commensurate with the whole diameter of our being". He eschews the term supernatural on account of its dualistic associations and adopts instead the term supernormal which does not dissect reality into unrelated opposites. He quotes from scientific writers to show that the naïve belief in the reality of the familiar world has been shaken by the recent discoveries; for not only are the familiar concepts taken from the middle region of experience not applicable to matter beyond a certain point, but even the substantiality of matter itself has dwindled into mere mathematical abstractions. He points out that both the materialism and metaphysics of the West have failed to reveal the nature of Reality. In the next part he tries to answer some of the current arguments against spiritualism and adduces

certain evidence in favour of survival. The last section is devoted to bringing out the philosophical, ethical, and religious significance of spiritualism and the need of imparting such instruction to the young. Spiritualism, he believes, has not only undermined the foundations of a supernaturalistic theology but has indefinitely extended the field of experience as an object of philosophical enquiry. It points to a new ethic different from that enjoined by orthodox theology which with its teachings of grace and faith tend to ignore the reaction of conduct on character.

Though we did not need a new book to tell us that materialism of the last century is at a discredit or that the rational philosophy of the West has failed to discover the nature of Reality, what seems to have made the author's attempt worth while are his brief and cogent presentation of the case for the supernormal and his able pleading for a more rational outlook on life and Reality which civilized world needs so badly today and which will bear any amount of reiteration. Philosophy has not waited for the teachings of spiritualism to extend its field of enquiry, for philosophers have already come to recognize the incompleteness of that investigation which leaves out of account the facts of mystic experience. Nor are the implications of spiritualism at all definitely clear. Various theories are on foot. It is not easy to decide between them. It is too premature to deduce any deep religious or ethical significance from it alone. Spiritualism can both kill or foster the genuine search after Truth. Ethics stands in no need of being propped up by it. The greatest mystics of all ages and climes have not only hinted at the Reality in so far as thought and language are capable of being so utilized so, but also have discovered the *raison d'être* of all morality.

#### SELECT MODERN CONSTITUTIONS.

By N. R. Subba Ayyar, M.A., *The Sri Krishna Publishing House, Kumbakonam*, 372 pp. Price Rs. 3/-.

There is no dearth of books on Governments nowadays. Politics is a fascinating subject, and books have multiplied rapidly as the circle of political consciousness and interest has widened. The justification for the appearance of this book is that it aims to give in a compendious form an account of the frame-work and actual working of the most important constitutions of

the present world. Ten constitutions, four unitary and six federal, namely, Great Britain, France, South Africa, Ireland, the U. S. A., Canada, Australia, Switzerland, Germany, and the U. S. S. R. form the subject of treatment. Though the Weimar constitution is now obsolete, it has been rightly included for some of its novel features. The general account is prefaced by two short chapters which give a short account of the different methods, past and present, of classification of constitutions and the structure of government. The covenant of the League of Nations is given at the end of the book.

The author has consulted all the best available works on the subject. He has incorporated all the important and useful informations into a short succinct treatment. He has further followed the prevailing realistic method of treatment which tries to unbare the spirit and real working of an often misleading form. The author would, however, have done better had he been a little more careful in a place or two. Instead of remarking that in a flexible constitution there is no distinction between 'constituent' and ordinary laws, it would have been more proper and intelligible to say between 'constituent' and ordinary powers; for there is always a distinction between the different kinds of laws. Again, apropos the force of convention with regard to the re-election to the Presidency in the U. S. A. the statement "... the constitution sets no limit to the re-election of a person to the Presidency but convention has limited it to one term" is easily liable to misconstruction. These minor things, however, do not detract from the worth of the treatment, which is always faithful and up-to-date and which can be safely relied on. We are sure it will prove very useful to all beginners of studies in governments.

#### SANSKRIT-HINDI

(1) ISAVASYOPANISHAD, (2) KENO-PANISHAD, (3) KATHOPANISHAD, (4) PRASNOPANISHAD, AND (5) MUNDAKOPANISHAD. Gita Press, Gorakhpur. Pp. 42, 140, 168, 121, and 124 respectively. Price 3, 8, 9, 7, and 7 annas respectively.

The series contains the texts of the *Upanishads*, Sankara Bhāṣyas, their Hindi translations, and Indexes of Slokas. Keno-panishad contains both the Pada and Vākya Bhāṣyas. The translations are true and lucid but have the unavoidable defect of

sometimes using the same words of the Bhāṣyas and the texts—a defect which the English translations do not have. But the translator is not to blame, the defect is due to the Sanskrit origin of Hindi, Bengali, and other allied languages, which abound in Sanskrit words. The readers, however, would have been greatly helped if, in all cases where the original words had to be kept in the translation, the editor had added foot-notes by way of explanation. As a popular edition of the *Upanishads* and the Bhāṣyas we have all praise for the attempt.

**MUMUKSHU-SARVASVA-SĀRA.** By Mukti Nath Munindra and translated by Munilal. *Gita Press, Gorakhpur. Pp. 402. Price 13 annas only.*

The book is a choice collection of verses from the *Upanishads* and *Smritis* as well as the philosophical treatises of comparatively later dates, and gives the philosophy and practical method of the Vedānta. The author has kept up the continuity by supplying not a few verses of his own composition. It is divided into five Prakaranas—the first deals with, in the orthodox fashion with the Adhikāri (the fit recipient of the Vedāntic instructions), the subject-matter, its utility and the like; the second and the third deal with the purification of the mind; the fourth with Sannyāsa and its classifications; and the fifth establishes the equation of the individual soul and the Supreme Self. Hence the book gives in a nutshell all that a student and a Sādhaka of Vedānta wants to know. The translation has left nothing to be desired.

**PREM DARSANA OR NĀRADA-BHAKTI-SUTRA.** Edited and translated into Hindi by Hanumanprasad Poddar. *Gita Press, Gorakhpur. Pp. 18+179. Price 5 annas only.*

The book is not merely the text and Hindi translation of the aphorisms of Nārada but contains a high-class Hindi commentary interspersed with beautiful quotations from Sanskrit and Hindi scriptures on devotion. Mr. Poddar deserves thanks for presenting such an edition of the aphorisms to the Hindi-reading public.

**SRI-GOVINDA-DAMODARA-STOTRA.** By Vilwamangalāchārya, with Hindi translation.

*Gita Press, Gorakhpur. Pp. 37. Price 1 anna 6 pies only.*

It is a psalm composed and sung by a devotee of the Lord known to every Hindu for his wonderful love for the Lord.

### BENGALI

**VIGNĀNE VIRODH. PART III. TĀP O TEJ.** By Jatindra Nath Ray. *Published by Brajendra Nath Chattopadhyaya, 55, Upper Chitpore Road, Calcutta, 113+10 pp. Price 6 as.*

This is the author's third venture in this line. It purports to show like the previous ones several contradictions and anomalies in the findings of science. The present booklet raises objections to some of the accepted scientific conclusions in Physics about heat. It seems that the author has been misguided by some unqualified statements in certain text books on the subject. These and other doubts, we are sure, will be dispelled by the light of further information.

**MĀ.** BY SRI AUROBINDO. Translated by Nalinikanto Gupta. The Arya Publishing House, Calcutta, pp 82. Price -/12/- annas only.

This little book might worthily be called the quintessence of Sri Aurobindo's teachings. It is written in the translator's peculiar style, which is not meant for all and sundry. Those who are conversant with the style will almost enjoy the beauty of the original; but those who are unfortunately not familiar with it will, we are afraid, miss many valuable things which they would not have done had the language been comparatively simple. The book is beautifully got up.

### HINDI

**KALYĀN-YOGĀNK.** *Gita Press, Gorakhpur, pp. 884.*

The volume is a store-house of information on all kinds of Yoga, mostly from the pen of those whose reputation either as a scholar or a Sādhaka is established. It contains numerous pictures illustrative of the topics discussed or otherwise connected with them. Our sincere thanks are due to the editors and managers of the Press for presenting India with such a useful volume.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### SRI RAMAKRISHNA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

#### AT SHANTINIKETAN

The Ramakrishna Centenary was celebrated in the Ashram on the 25th of February last when in the evening the inmates including a sprinkling of European visitors assembled at the prayer hall which was decorated with 'alpona' and flowers.

The singing of appropriate songs added to the solemnity of the occasion. Pandit Kshitimohan Sen Shastri conducting the special service said:—

"Sri Ramakrishna was a born Mahapurusha who lived in and practised the varied forms of spiritual sadhana only to awaken the vast psychic forces within him so as to give a dynamic impetus to the dissemination of his great message to the world. He was not so much conscious of this special mission of his; but the time spirit demanded of him that he should enrich the thought treasures of humanity with his wonderful spiritual knowledge realized through direct experiences. Born of poor parents and in conditions not at all favourable, Sri Ramakrishna had also his days of struggles and strivings but all these he sublimated into one supreme effort towards God-realization; and the fire that was in him consumed every bit of obstacle in his way till he was face to face with the luminous vision of truth.

"India is a land where mysteriously enough diversity and discord are deemed to be invaluable factors for proving the existence of unity and concord. Men of extraordinary spiritual attainments have many a time come to deliver man from the bondage of false religious notions and superstitious customs which snap asunder the ties of love and fellowship and embitter human relations to an inordinate degree. Sri Ramakrishna was in the line of those Master Men, who from the very early days of human civilization have made their appearance in the scene of life through its different stages and at different countries in order mainly to show that life was at its highest only when it realized its unity in the midst of its diverse expressions. It was this Religion of

Unity and Synthesis which Sri Ramakrishna embodied in his life; and being himself gifted with an abiding measure of 'prana-sakti', he triumphed towards the fulfilment of this great objective. The world accepted his message through his great disciple Swami Vivekananda whose wonderful sway over the minds of his own countrymen as well as of his western admirers could never be over-estimated.

"Sri Ramakrishna's contact with the Sadhus and Bhaktas gave him an insight into the various modes of self-discipline of different religious schools of India; and Vivekananda and Keshabchandra served to bring before the Master their knowledge of the Western science of thought. But while assimilating all these from outside, Sri Ramakrishna was blessed in the world of his inner being with transcendental experiences which compelled universal admiration.

"Such was the great soul whose memory we worship to-day, hundred years after his birth. But would mere wordy and ceremonial homage to him be enough to show our love for Sri Ramakrishna if we do not practise in our life the truths we say, he so impressively told? Let us emulate the lesson of a great life like Ramakrishna's and let us follow his teachings by throwing away the mental and social shackles that bind us down."

The function terminated with suitable music.

#### AT CUTTACK

At the instance of the Ramakrishna Centenary Committee, Cuttack, a public meeting was held in the Ramachandra Bhawan, on the 25th of February on the occasion of the birth-day of Sri Ramakrishna, Mr. Hornele, Commissioner of Orissa presiding.

It was a big representative gathering as the elites of the town of Cuttack representing the important religious views numbering about five hundred joined the function. The President read out his address in which he admired the saying of Ramakrishna, and the writing of Swami Vivekananda on the merits of their universality and asked the people of New Orissa especially to read the

messages which deal mostly as to the requirements of a nation.

Other speakers also addressed the meeting.

#### AT MADRAS

The centenary of the birthday of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated with great solemnity and devotion at the Sri Ramakrishna Mutt, Mylapore, on the 1st of March last.

In the morning, there was Bhajana and Puja. Nearly a thousand poor were fed. In the afternoon, there was a Harikatha Kalakshepam by Brahmasri Murthi Rao.

Mr. Venugopal Pillai, Tamil Pandit, delivered a lecture on 'Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Religious Harmony.' After referring to select anecdotes in the life of Sri Ramakrishna, the lecturer pointed out that Sri Ramakrishna laid emphasis on religious tolerance.

Mr. S. R. Ranganathan delivered a lecture in English on "Sri Ramakrishna and the play of intuition in his life." Prof. S. Kuppuswami Sastrigal presided.

Mr. Ranganathan said that the lives of souls like Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Sankara transcended approach by scientific methods. Science was a body of factual knowledge. Surrounding the body of knowledge was a fringe which represented the controversial part of science, and outside that fringe was the Great Unknown. The development of personalities like Ramakrishna belonged to the Great Unknown. The only method of understanding such transcendental beings, was intuition.

The speaker stated that intuition was an extra conscious process, of which very little was known. To understand that expression, they had nothing to guide them except the inferences derived from the recorded biographies of such souls. They were very fortunate in having an authentic biography of Sri Ramakrishna written by men who had the opportunity of moving with the Swami intimately. Intuition, according to one definition, was 'direct apprehension by the mind without the intervention of perception, conception or reason or any mental process.' Ramakrishna's very birth seemed to have been profoundly conditioned by the intuitional forebodings which his father received

at Gaya and which his mother obtained simultaneously while she was worshipping in the temple of Siva in her village.

Proceeding, the lecturer said that there were various anecdotes in the Swami's life which revealed the enormous amount of work that had been done, and the strain to which he had to subject himself, before the play of intuition could take place.

The next requisite of intuition was complete suppression of kama, krotha and lobha. Intuition was again notoriously mysterious and evasive. It would choose its own time and method of expression. 'Its deliverance resembled the verdict of a secret court martial.' The unusual tenacity with which Sri Ramakrishna used to follow certain lines of action indicated to him by intuition would illustrate this feature.

One other feature of intuition, the speaker said, was that when it disclosed truths to realized souls, it transcended ordinary verbal expressions. That was why they found in the utterances of realized souls like Jesus Christ and Ramakrishna parables and paradoxes.

With regard to the validity of intuition as a source of knowledge, the lecturer said that there were three schools of thought, one completely denying its validity, the Agnostics, the second the Neo-Platonists recognising it as the only source of knowledge, and the third, a school of compromise who admitted it as a possible source of knowledge. The lecturer was of opinion that all their metaphysical discussions could be set at rest by coming into contact or being in the presence of realized souls. The lecturer said that there were several anecdotes to illustrate this point in the life of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna.

One great lesson which educationists could learn from the study of the life of Sri Ramakrishna, was the extremely facile way in which the Swamiji adopted individualistic methods in teaching his disciples. This method was coming into the forefront of educational theory at the present time. The Swamiji adapted his methods to suit each of his disciples.

The lecturer, in conclusion, thanked the organisers for giving him an opportunity to participate in the celebrations and pay his homage to the great rishi of modern days.





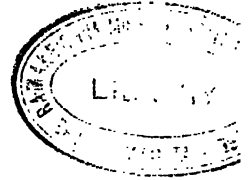
Sri Ramakrishna Centenary at the New York Town Hall, March 8, 1936.

# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

## SWAMI VIVEKANANDA IN OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

(From the ‘Oakland Enquirer’)

March 8, 1900 •

### KEEP OUT OF HEAVEN

*This the Object of the Hindoo's Search*

*The Swami on the Laws*

*of Life and Death*

*Only by Escaping from Life Can One  
Escape from Slavery to Freedom.*

“How to get rid of this birth and death—not how to go to heaven, but how one can stop going to heaven—this is the object of the search of the Hindoo.”

The foregoing was one of the startling statements of the Swami Vivekananda made in the course of his explanation of the doctrine of reincarnation which forms so conspicuous a part of the religion of the people who live in the land of Juggernaut. He told how the life of man, in the view of the Hindoo, is bound in the endless chain of the law of cause and effect, how freedom can never be found in this world, and how the mind of the Hindoo people turns

forever to the thought of how man can rid himself of the burden and torment of existence.

“This sounds harsh to Western people,” said the Swami; “to the people of the Anglo-Saxon race it is particularly repellent; but it is the truth, and it must be told.”

The subject of the Swami's lecture last evening was “The Laws of Life and Death,” and he began with the fundamental conceptions of the Hindu cosmology. Law is everywhere. Nothing stands isolated—everything is a part of the never-ending procession of cause and effect. If there are higher beings than man, they also must obey the laws. Life can only spring from life, thought from thought, matter from matter. A universe cannot be created out of nothing. It has existed forever. If human beings came into the world fresh from the hands of nature, they would come without impressions; but we do not come that way, which shows



that we are not created afresh. If human souls are created out of nothing, what is to prevent them from going back into nothing? If we are to live all the time in the future, we must have lived all the time in the past.

In the belief of the Hindoo the soul is neither mind nor body. What is it which remains stable—which can say I am I? Not the body, for it is always changing, and not the mind, which changes even more rapidly than the body—which never has the same thoughts for even a few minutes. There must be an identity which does not change—something which is to man what the banks are to the river—the banks which do not change and without whose immobility we would not be conscious of the constantly flowing stream. Behind the body, behind even the mind, there must be something, viz.: the soul, which unifies man. Mind is merely the fine instrument through which the soul—the master—acts on the body. In India we say a man gives up his body, while you say a man gives up his ghost. The Hindoos believe that a man is a soul and has a body, while Western people believe he is a body and possesses a soul.

Death overtakes everything which is complex. The soul is a single element—not composed of anything else—and therefore it cannot die. By its very nature the soul must be immortal. Body, mind, soul turn upon the wheel of law—none can escape. No more can we transcend the law than can the stars, than can the sun—it is all a universe of law. The law of Karma is that every action must be followed sooner or later by an effect. The Egyptian seed which was taken from the hand of a mummy after 5000 years and sprang to life when planted is the type of the never-ending influence of

human acts. Action can never die without producing action. Now if our acts can only produce their appropriate effects on this plane of existence, it follows that we must all come back to round out the circle of causes and effects. This is the doctrine of reincarnation. We are the slaves of law, the slaves of conduct, the slaves of thirst, the slaves of desire, the slaves of a thousand things. Only by escaping from life can we escape from slavery to freedom. God is the only one who is free. God and freedom are one and the same.

This evening the Swami, whose audience last night was large and attentive, will lecture on "The Reality and the Shadow".

Friday, March 9, 1900

### REALITY AND SHADOW

*The Swami's Second Address on  
Vedantist Philosophy*

*He Says That There Is Reality  
Only in The Soul of Man*

"The Reality and The Shadow" was the subject of the second lecture by the Hindoo Philosopher Vivekananda at Wendte Hall last evening. The auditorium was well filled despite the unpropitious evening. The Swami spoke in part as follows:

"The soul of man is ever striving after certainty, to find something that does not change. It is never satisfied. Wealth, the gratification of ambition or of appetite are all changeable. Once these are attained man is not content. Religion is the science which teaches us whence to satisfy this longing after the unchangeable. Behind all the local colours and deviations religions teach the same thing—that there is reality only in the soul of man."

"The philosophy of Vedantism teaches that there are two worlds, the external or sensory, and the internal or subjective—the thought world.

"It posits three fundamental concepts—time, space and causation. From these is constituted *Mâyâ*, the essential groundwork of human thought, not the product of thought. This same conclusion was arrived at a later date by the great German philosopher, Kant.

"My reality, that of nature, and of God is the same, the difference is in form of manifestation. The differentiation is caused by *Mâyâ*. As the contour of the shore may shape the ocean into bay, strait or inlet; but when this shaping force or *Mâyâ* is removed the separate form disappears, the differentiation ceases, all is ocean again."

The Swami then spoke of the roots of the theory of evolution to be found in the Vedantist philosophy.

"All modern religions start with the idea," continued the speaker, "that man was once pure, he fell, and will become pure again. I don't see where they get this idea. The seat of knowledge is the soul, external circumstance simply stimulates the soul; knowledge is the power of the soul. Century after century it has been manufacturing bodies. The various forms of incarna-

tion are merely successive chapters in the story of the life of the soul. We are constantly building our bodies. The whole universe is in a state of flux, of expansion and contraction, of change. Vedantism holds that the soul never changes in essence, but it is modified by *Mâyâ*. Nature is God limited by Mind. The evolution of nature is the modification of the soul. The soul in essence is the same in all forms of being. Its expression is modified by the body. This unity of soul, this common substance of humanity, is the basis of ethics and morality. In this sense all are one, and to hurt one's brother is to hurt one's self.

"Love is simply an expression of this infinite unity. Upon what dualistic system can you explain love? One of the European philosophers says that kissing is a survival of cannibalism, a kind of expression of 'how good you taste'. I don't believe it.

"What is it we all seek: freedom. All the effort and struggle of life is for freedom. It is the march universal of races, of worlds and of systems.

"If we are bound, who bound us? No power can bind the infinite but itself."

After the discourse an opportunity was afforded for asking questions of the speaker, who devoted half an hour to answering them.

## THE EDUCATION THAT INDIA NEEDS TODAY

BY THE EDITOR

### I

It has been said that education is the watchword of the twentieth century. The cry for education is everywhere, and all nations have more or less taken up the cause in right earnest for the

removal of illiteracy and for the spread of knowledge in their own countries. The theories of education and their methods of application have been varied and numerous in the educational movements of the day. The

branch of learning. It was for the teacher to instruct him, to maintain him in his own house, and to treat him as a son.

Intellectual culture and secular education were regarded as useless, if they did not lead to a corresponding development of personality and character. They laid stress upon character which ought to rule society, because it is said in the *Mahābhārata*: "Those families that are possessed of members, wealth, and kine, are not regarded as respectable, if they be wanting in good manners and conduct, while families wanting in wealth, but distinguished by manners and good conduct are regarded as such and win great reputation."; "Whether of low or high birth, he who doth not transgress the rules of polite behaviour, who hath an eye on virtue, who is endowed with humility and modesty, is superior to a hundred persons of high birth."; "Neither friends nor wealth, nor high birth, nor scriptural learning, nor Mantras, nor energy, can succeed in rescuing one from sorrow in the next world. It is only by conduct that one can attain to felicity there."; "One who has got a true knowledge of the contents of books is greater than one who remembers them, and one who acts according to that knowledge is greater than one who has merely gained a knowledge of their contents."

Thus we find that education in ancient India was man-making in the truest sense of the term and in every way was a real preparation for life. The spiritual ideal of education was made supreme and the secular aspect was made subordinate to it. Such a scheme of education could meet the demands of universal good and social necessity. In his book entitled *Ancient Indian Education* Rev. F. E. Keay observes: "If education is described as a preparation for life, or for complete living, we

may say that the ancient Indian educators would fully have accepted the doctrine. But it would have included preparation not only for this life, but also for a future existence. The harmonizing of these two purposes in due proportions has always been a difficult task for educators. If it could be perfectly accomplished, many of the problems of education would be solved. But in practice there has always been oscillation. Thus in the Middle Ages in Europe stress was laid upon preparation for the world to come, while modern European systems often tend unduly to ignore this side of education. India has had the same problem to face, and has had similar difficulties in meeting it. The Young Brāhman was being prepared by the education he received for his practical duties in life as a priest and teacher of others, but the need of preparing himself for the life after death was also included in the teaching he received. The same may be said of the Young Kshatriyas and Vaisyas who were required not only to fit themselves for their practical work in life, but also to study the Vedas, and give heed to the teaching of religion."

The idea of the four stages or Āsramas in life was conceived by the seers of ancient India not to despise the practical duties of life. The students who were not fit to renounce the world completely passed to the state of a householder, then they became forest hermits and after that, wandering ascetics. So, people were taught to travel towards Truth through a gradual process of evolution, save in exceptional cases.

The position of the teacher in ancient India was a very responsible as teaching was a most sacred vocation with him. Referring to the behaviour of the teacher towards his pupils, Manu says: "Created beings must be instructed in

what concerns their welfare without giving them pain, and sweet and gentle speech must be used by a teacher who desires to abide by the sacred law. He, forsooth, whose speech and thoughts are pure and ever perfectly guarded, gains the whole reward which is conferred by the Vedânta. Let him not, even though in pain, speak words cutting others to the quick; let him not injure others in thought and deed; let him not utter speeches which make others afraid of him, since that will prevent him from gaining heaven." Āpastamba says that not only was the teacher to love his pupils as his own sons, but he was to give them full attention in the teaching of arts and sciences, and to withhold no part of them from his pupils. The distance and mutual indifference that we find between modern teachers and their pupils are the bitterest fruits of the modern system of education, and it must be said that unless the relation between them becomes more close, sympathetic, and elevating, the real aim of education will remain unrealized. So far as education in modern India is concerned, it may be said that the authorities of schools and colleges of today should not delay in reviving the grand, old ideal of relationship between the teacher and the taught.

It is interesting to recollect the instructions of the Indian teachers of old after the conclusion of their pupils' studies. The teachers used to say: "Say what is true! Do thy duty! Do not neglect the study of the *Vedas*! After having brought to thy teacher his proper reward, do not cut off the line of children! Do not swerve from the truth! Do not swerve from Dharma! Do not neglect what is useful! Do not deviate from prosperity! Do not stray away from the study and teaching of the *Vedas*!"

It would be wrong to suppose that in

ancient India, people did not stress the proper performance of social duties. Emphasis was laid on the right execution of one's social functions, through which alone one could progress in spirituality and ultimately attain union with the Supreme. The secret of it was taught in performing duties without the least regard for direct or indirect results and in worshipping the Supreme with one's own duty. Thus a philosophy of life and its practical application was also a great point in the ancient system of education in India. The result of it was that pupils could get the solution of practical problems in life even in the period of their studentship—a thing so essential and so wanting in the modern system of education.

### III

Today we hear people say often that moral and religious training are extra-academic, and that religion has been the bane of India. To them we may point out that mere book-learning without moral and religious education has produced men and women who are good for nothing in any sphere of life, be it domestic, national, or social. If this system of education continues for another fifty years, it is to be feared that manhood of the nation will be completely destroyed.

Seeing the negative character and the soul-killing method of modern education, Swami Vivekananda suggested to his countrymen to combine Western science with Vedânta, to revive the man-making elements of ancient education. To the Indians especially, he sounded a clarion call for the cultivation of *Sraddhâ* or faith in one's own self. He deplored the condition of modern students in India and said: "The education that our boys receive is very negative. The school-boy learns

nothing, but has everything of his own broken down—want of *Sraddhâ* is the result. The *Sraddhâ* which is the keynote of the *Vedas* and the *Vedânta*—the *Sraddhâ* which emboldened Nachiketas to face Yama and question him, through which *Sraddhâ* this world moves—the annihilation of that *Sraddhâ* ! ‘अज्ञानाद्ब्रह्मणश्च संशयाद्वा विनश्यति’— ‘The ignorant, the man devoid of *Sraddhâ*, the doubting self runs to ruin.’ Therefore are we so near destruction. The remedy now is, the spread of education, first of all, Self-knowledge. I do not mean thereby, matted hair, staff, Kamandalu and mountain caves which the word suggests. What do I mean then? Cannot the knowledge by which is attained even freedom from the bondage of worldly existence, bring ordinary material prosperity? Certainly it can.” This *Sraddhâ* should be the corner-stone in the edifice of future education for India and in it the future generations will find the crown of all noble virtues and the spring of all glorious deeds. This will solve the problem of education which was raised by Herbert Spencer in the nineteenth century and which young men and women of India raise today: “How to live?—that is the essential question for us. Not how to live in the mere material sense only, but in the widest

sense. The general problem which comprehends every social problem is—the right ruling of conduct in all directions under all circumstances. In what way to treat the body; in what way to treat the mind; in what way to manage our affairs; in what way to bring up a family; in what way to behave as a citizen; in what way to utilise those sources of happiness which nature supplies—how to use all our faculties to the greatest advantage of ourselves and others—how to live completely?” The message of *Sraddhâ* as inculcated in the *Upanishads* and in the *Gîtâ* will not only awaken the dormant faculties in the individual, but also regenerate modern India. The *Bible*, the *Quran*, the Buddhist and other scriptures in the world speak of *Sraddhâ*, only in different ways, and it is for the authorities and leaders of different communities to preach it in the modern schools and colleges of India and provide for the inclusion of the principle in the scheme of modern education. Bodily fitness, intellectual equipment, and mental qualities are not to be overlooked, but they should follow in the natural and fruitful way in the footsteps of *Sraddhâ*. Without going into doctrinal controversies and religious bigotry, adequate provision can be made for such a spiritual training by educators of modern India for the uplift of the Indian nation.

## THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF INDIAN TOLERANCE

By PROF. DR. STANISLAW SCHAYER

One of the most precious acquisitions of modern civilization is Tolerance in matters of religious creeds and cults. It is, however, by no means an expression of some new religious attitude, but on

the contrary, a result of an advancing process of secularization of that domain of life which till now had been governed by purely religious standards. In other words, the states and societies of

Western Europe "tolerate" side by side, different beliefs and churches, different theologies and rituals, not because they consider them to be equally true, but because they are thought to be harmless, or even useful elements for the preservation of the existent social, political and economic order. If our statesmen of today, even for a moment, thought that the well-being of the state depended on fervently practised religious rites, prescribed by any particular church, they would have certainly committed all atheists and heretics to prison. What I want to emphasize by this, is that the Western tolerance is tantamount to *indifferentism*, hence, a negation rather than a sublimation of religious feelings.

In India it is a different thing. "I am proud," says Swami Vivekananda. "to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true. . . To the Hindu, then, the whole world of religions is a travelling, a coming up, of different men and women, through various conditions and circumstances, to the same goal. Every religion is only an evolving God out of the material man, and the same God is the inspirer of all of them."<sup>1</sup> As we shall see, the universalism of the orthodox Brahminism, however, is not without limitations. Nevertheless the fact remains that India is the country of nearly absolute toleration, which is literally a religious one and constitutes in itself, contrary to the Western indifferentism, a purely religious phenomenon. It is undoubtedly a matter of faith and is grounded, as rightly alluded to by

Vivekananda, upon the conviction that in all religions, from the most primitive idolatry to the most sublime mysticism, the same Truth, the same Divinity and the same Absolute is expressed.

This conception goes back as early as the *Rig-Veda*. Its corollary was the doctrine of the symbolical nature of all cults and myths; behind all avatâras of the Vaishnavite synthesis is hidden the same transcendental divinity, and the same divine activity is hidden behind all Saktis of Siva. Hence the most developed polytheism and poly-demonism on the one hand, and the most radical monism and pantheism on the other, could easily be reconciled. For a simple Hindu for instance, each image of a god is the god himself, and the Siva in the temple of X and the Siva in the temple of Y are two different personalities. But the official theology does not accept this belief, just as the Catholic Church does not approve of the popular faith in a variety of local Madonnas. For the philosophical Brahminism the plastic representation of a god is only a symbolical support for the mystic Upâsanâ, the sole object of which is the supra-sensuous and abstract Reality. In the light of such an interpretation, idolatry becomes a means of meditative technique, and the idol a requisite<sup>2</sup> for cultivating the most intimate religious feelings.

Now the question arises as to how to understand the relation between the symbol and the symbolized object. In the old-Vedic times, when Brahminical theology made use exclusively of magical categories, this relation was identical with a mysterious equivalence. Although the symbol was not adequately

<sup>2</sup> There is also another theory: according to Ramanuja images (*arcâ*) is one of the five different modes in which the one Absolute is existent,

<sup>1</sup> Chicago Addresses, pp. I and 16.

expressive of the symbolized reality, yet nevertheless, the former was conceived of as being actually bound with the latter in some hidden manner. In later Indian schools the problem of the adequate representation of Being by means of symbolic signs—words or images—was the subject of serious contentions. The rationalistic systems gave an affirmative solution, but the Vedānta and the Mahāyāna, precisely the two systems which were the basis of Indian universalism, answered in the negative : Brahman as well as the Dharmakāya are, in their pure form, inexpressible and inaccessible. Consequently there is no fundamental difference between primitive mythology and abstract scholasticism, between the adoration of the Supreme Eka-Sad in a stone idol and that in a metaphysical hypostasis.

This mystical *docta ignorantia*, however, is neither the unique nor even the principal aspect of Indian tolerance, which is essentially, by no means a philosophical but a purely sociological phenomenon, and can only be understood by an analysis of the social, economic and political background of Indian religious life. Without attempting an exhaustive and more systematic treatment of the problem, we shall draw the attention of the reader to some important issues.

To begin with, there is a close and intimate interdependence between the Indian tolerance and the Indian conception of priesthood as reflected in the sociological structure of the Brāhmana caste. The Sanskrit term Brāhmana (masc., accent on the first syllable) means literally “(an individual) endowed with the force of Brahman (neut., accent on the last syllable).” The etymology is not definitely settled, but the meaning is obvious; it is an Indo-Aryan version of the idea of an all-pervading magical fluid, well-known to ethnolo-

gists as the “mana” of Melanesians, the “orenda” of Iroquoises, the “wakonda” of Sioux etc. The Indian Brahman is contained mainly in rituals, holy psalms and spellings, but it is also a cosmic force influencing the course of nature, governing the fate of man and even overwhelming the will of Devas. It thus becomes easy to understand the reason on which is founded the holiness and the might of Brahmins : the possession of Brahman makes them tabooed supermen, charged with magical forces, while their ritualistic profession becomes an omnipotent technique with an illimitable and infallible efficacy.

Brahman though abiding in Brahmins, is also in the universe. It could be concluded therefore, that it is possible for everybody, if he possesses the sufficient magical powers, to acquire Brahman and thus become himself a Brahmin. Indeed, the Vedic mythology has it that King Visvāmitra after many thousand years of tapas, attained finally the quality of a Brahmanic Rishi. But this is an exception. The rule is that Brahman is an inherited force transmitted from generation to generation, through the seed of the father. Consequently the Indian priesthood is contrary to the Christian idea, not a sacrament acquired by consecration, but it is something biologically bound up with blood and birth, a *sui generis* sacred nobility possessed only by a certain class of Indian society. This racial conception of priesthood involves many important consequences. There arises, in the first place, the dilemma : when one is born a Brahmin, what is the use of the long period of Brahmacharya, of apprenticeship and the preparatory studies? The answer to this question can be only one : every scion of a Brahmanical family is endowed from birth with the holy power of Brahman, but nevertheless, he can apply this

power for definite goals of his own and those of his Yajamānas, only when he has mastered the complicated science of ritualistic techniques, exactly as a singer though gifted with a voice has to train and cultivate it. Hence birth as a Brahmin gives only the potential qualification of priesthood, whereas its realization remains a matter of individual development. The interdependence of these two elements, viz., the inherited and acquired qualifications, was estimated differently in the course of the history of Brahminism. In the interests of Brahmins, the emphasis was laid on birth, whereas the sectarian and non-conformist currents underlined the importance of individual merits. It is obvious that in this "bipolarity" was hidden a dangerously vulnerable point of Brahminism. The injunction that every Brahmin should study the Vedas and perform the rites, could be respected in ancient times, when the Indo-Aryan society formed a relatively isolated and not a large group among the native population. But when Aryan culture became diffused through immense areas of Hindustan, the secularization and professional differentiation of the priest-caste, were inevitable. Already in the early Buddhist epoch there existed not only Brahmins par excellence, actually following their sacerdotal vocation, but also "titulary" Brahmins living on various more or less "pure" professions, such as agriculture and cattle-rearing, commerce and large-scale business, (such as, financing of caravans), political professions, (such as employments at the king's court and in the administration of the states), etc. Needless to say that a priest-class, so heterogeneous in social and economic matters, could hardly be the advocate of any definite creed or cult. Both orthodoxy and intolerance always presuppose the existence of a

well-organized clergy and church, and these two factors are missing in the history of Indian religions.

Now we come to the second topic which is the political aspect of Brahminism. Its significance to the problem of toleration can be easily understood if we take into account the fact that even the most militant clergy could not gain much without leaning on state-authority. In other words, intolerance can become an element regulating and controlling the life of society only under such circumstances as when the power of the state has rightly or wrongly identified orthodoxy with the *raison d'état*.

In the majority of Eastern civilizations this identification is given a priori: the king is a king-priest and as a rule, an embodiment of divinity patronizing over the state, so that the religious cult is by itself a public and state one. A series of principal traits characterize this type of religions. The king-priest as the representative of Heaven, is personally responsible for the well-being of his subjects, the orderly functioning of social institutions and that of Nature. As an individual charged with magical holiness, he ably performs his duty of an intermediary between gods and men. The priests who really execute the rites are merely his plenipotentiaries, and so on.<sup>3</sup>

If we return to India and look for Indian parallels to the ideas spoken above, our attention will doubtless be directed towards the conception of Chakravartin. In the Buddhist version, the Chakravartin is only a doublet of the Tathâgata. Both possess the same

<sup>3</sup> A typical instance is supplied by Ancient Egypt. Amon-Re is not the god of the Egyptian people, but the god of Pharaoh, his son. The change of dynasty is identical with the change of state-religion. The god of Ptolemean Egypt is Serapis.



bodily marks and the same symbol of solar wheel, the emblem of Buddhist Dharma and of Paramount royal sovereignty. The reign of Asoka can be considered as an historical attempt to realize this unity. Indeed, the great protector of Buddhistic Sangha, without being formally its head, played a rôle which greatly exceeded the normal activities of an Upâsaka. He was, as we are told, the inspirer of the third Council at Pataliputra and the organizer of Buddhist missions; in his Bhabra-Edict he recommends seven topics for study by monks etc. It is to be expected that if the power of the Mauryas lasted longer, a compromise between the utopianism of Asoka's Dharma and realism of politics would certainly have been arrived at in some way or other. If it were so, the rise of an Indian type of theocratical Imperialism would not have been impossible. But actually the evolution did not take that direction. The empire of Chandragupta, under the immediate successors of Asoka, was broken up. In its western part were settled Graeco-Bactrian and Central-Asiatic dynasties; in the east a Brahminical reaction took place.

In this connection one wonders why it was that the theory of Unity of State and Religion was not successful in India alone, whereas it was not only confined to the countries of its classic development, but had overrun the Roman Empire and had survived in Europe until the Modern Age? The answer is not far to seek. As the edicts of Asoka were an imitation of old-Persian inscriptions by means of which the Kings of Kings transmitted to posterity their glorious deeds, so the mythology connected by the Chakravartin-Tathâgata is not of Indian origin, but a foreign, probably Iranian, import. It found no acceptance in India because it was not

only alien to but also directly contradicted the most ancient and deep-rooted Indo-Aryan tradition, for which priestly sanctity and royal majesty were two totally different qualities, allowing of no combination of the two in the same person. Eighteen centuries after Asoka an attempt to create a State-Religion was made by Akbar the Great. But his Din Ilahi did not survive its founder who was of alien descent and whose decree on Royal Infallibility was evidently inspired by non-Indian, Mahomedan traditions.

The genuine Hindu conception of the inter-relation between priesthood and kingship, can be understood by an analysis of the game of chess. This game, doubtlessly originating in India, is no other than a scheme of a war between two Chaturangas. The presence of the queen by the side of the king in the field of battle, is hardly understandable without substituting the Indian correspondent, Purohita the Priest-Minister, for the queen. We come across this personage as assistant of the king, already in the hymns of the *Rig-Veda*, and we are informed of his function by the same old-Vedic sources. The worth of a Purohita depends on the greater or less "charge" of "Brahman", given to the service of his Royal patron. The Brahman of the Purohita "protects" the king and his enterprises in times of peace as well as in times of war. When the enemies are the Dasyus, the matter is quite simple. The god Indra invigorated by the force of Brahman destroys the black varna and accords victory to the Aryans. But when the contest is between Aryans and Aryans, the situation becomes rather complicated. Indra is forced to choose between two parties who are both his devotees and claim his succour simultaneously. Pulled in two opposite directions by the magical fluid

of incantations sent by the two rival Purohitas, he goes over to that party whose Purohita possesses the stronger Brahman. Judging from the above, who can deny that the most potent factor in the king's army is the priest alone?

During the course of history this hyper-magical conception underwent a considerable moderation, and some of its features were effaced, so that in the historical times the Purohita became rather a private counsellor and spiritual guide of the king than a magical incantator. Nevertheless, for a better understanding of Indian conditions, it is advisable to start from the primitive state with its exaggerated magies. We see then that in Aryan India the differentiation of priestly and kingly qualities has a very old tradition. The sacred power deciding the prosperity of the kingdom was entirely concentrated in the persons of professional and hereditary virtuosos, bound only by a free contract with their patrons, and always ready to offer their services to another. There existed, no doubt, faithful Purohitas, but the fact remains that the relation between them and their royal sires was the same as that between an employee and his employer, the latter exploiting the talents of the former. It was to the interest of the Purohitas that the kings "should be very numerous", and the same applied to the Brahmin-Mantrins and other States-Dignitaries as well as Brahmin priests without a permanent employment at the court, and living on occasional *Dakshinās*. Unlike other clergies e.g. in Sassanidan Persia, the Indian Brahmins were never advocates of an imperial ideology. They were not interested in the creation and maintenance of an all-India empire. The political milieu within which they lived and thrived, was in India atomized into a great number of kingdoms and

principates, comparable to Italy in the epoch of Renaissance.

It is now easy to understand in what sense and how far it is right to say that Brahminical India is a land where Religion is traditionally separated from the State. If on the one hand the political ambitions of Brahmins were limited to securing economic and social privileges, then on the other hand the politics of kings were always very far from any anti-Brahminism. It does not prove, however, that there was a political superiority of Brahmins to kings. The conditions described in Buddhist records, inform us rather to the contrary, and as far as Vedic theories about the earthly divinity of Brahmins are concerned, they obviously characterize priestly claims and do not reflect the existing state of affairs. The act of anointment (*Abhisheka*) wanted evidently the assistance of a priest, but that was not an investiture of secular powers by ecclesiastics, but only a ritual performed for the benefit of a royal client by a specialist and for a fixed fee. Besides, it was not this act by means of which one got the quality of a king; for the Indian kingship was not a sacrament, but either an hereditary potency exactly like the Brahman, or a personal one tested and legalized only by the effective success in the struggle for supremacy. As a result, if we sum up the long course of Indian history, we are struck by the harmonious co-operation and solidarity between kings and Brahmins notwithstanding some accidental deviations from this fundamental principle of old Indian polity.

In the foregoing remarks are implicitly contained all facts for understanding why Indian Brahmins in spite of their political influence, fortified economic position and high moral authority, have never played the rôle of warders of any orthodoxy. The answer

is found in that the Brahmins as professionals strove only for the acquisition and preservation of a possibly absolute monopoly of religious matters. Possessing this monopoly in actuality, Brahminism could, to some extent, control Indian religions; it is to be clearly understood, however, that it was not the Brahmins but their clients who decided the contents and the character of Indian cults.

The old-Vedic ritual was, in the first place, meant for knights and kings, and evidently this economically privileged class alone was able to pay fantastic fees for complicated and pompous sacrifices. No wonder, the Canon of the Trayi-Vidyâ bears clearly marks of a high-society religion. But in the course of centuries, side by side with the expansion of Aryo-Vedic culture, the ethnical structure of the warrior class was changed. So for instance, the Râjâs of Eastern India in the Buddhist epoch, were mostly merely Aryanized and not Aryan clans (Austro-Asiatic?), having nothing in common with the loyal families of Vedic times. The first centuries of the Christian era brought further radical changes. The ancient highly educated Kshatriyas, competent to discuss metaphysical problems with Brahmins, were replaced by Râjputs, illiterate scions of Western and Central-Asiatic invaders. In these circumstances the Aryan character of Râjâs became a pure fiction. The goddess Sri, the Indian *Fortuna Regia*, has never had any racial prejudices.

Side by side with the changes in the ethnical structure of the ruling class, there was another process, no less important, of extension of Brahminism to include a wider area of popular masses, non-Aryan (Dravidian) in most cases. These popular elements manifested themselves as early as the Vedic epoch and the entire further development can

be considered not only as Brahminization of non-Aryan cults and myths, but also as a constant process of influencing of Brahminism by the ancient pre-Aryan substratum. Almost all the peculiar features of the later Brahminism (Hinduism) are to be found in this. If, as we have stated above, the tendency of Brahmins were to preserve the monopoly of all religious rites independently of all transformations resulting from the expansion of the Aryo-Vedic civilization, then we can easily imagine the minimum price of this monopoly: approval and assimilation of all cults existing in India.

We must remember that India has always been a land of the greatest contrasts, and that there co-existed from the earliest times, nearly all possible types of religions, from the most primitive to the most sublime ones, from fetishism to mysticism, from atheistical magics to the most impassioned theism. And this welter of religions was really successfully assimilated in the Vedic tradition by Brahmins, assigning to the early ritualism the place of one element among many in this synthesis wherein every Hindu could find the satisfaction of his personal needs and aspirations. Without forming themselves into a church, nor possessing a hierarchy, in spite of the many sects, local differences etc., the Brahmins were able, in the course of many centuries, to hold the control of souls with a perfection unknown in other clerical and theocratic societies.

And so also is the theology of Brahminism, not one definite system, but a system of systems, a Samgraha of all possible Darsanas and Siddhântas. There is surely no need to ascribe too much importance to theologies and dogmas in relation to a real religious life. As far as Catholicism is concerned, it is commonly known that not only the

laity, but also a considerable part of the clergy have very little interest in such questions. Nevertheless, it is quite unimaginable that the co-existence of theism and atheism in the frame of the same religion could be tolerated in Europe. The Brahminical schools are mostly theistic or pantheistic, but the *Mīmāṃsā*, which continues the Vedic tradition, is blankly atheistic. It does not deny the existence of Devas, objects of ritual techniques, but it denies the existence of the One, Supreme and Omnipotent *Ivara*, the creator of the universe and the Lord of human destinies. Lastly, there is hardly such a theological view as could, in the opinion of Brahmins, compromise its adherents.

Strictly speaking, there is only one shibboleth of Brahminical orthodoxy: the faith in the revelatory character of the *Vedas*. Practically it has never signified a *sacrificium intellectus*, because the "symbolic interpretation" allows of a reading into the Holy Texts what one's soul desires. All depends on the clever deciphering of the codes despatched by the Rishis at the dawn of human history, and anyone mastering this craft can easily find in the Mantras the whole Advaitism, and in the Advaitism even Einstein and Rutherford. So it is at first sight difficult to understand why Brahminism attached so great an importance to this formal recognition of the *Vedas* on the one hand, and on the other why Buddhism so obstinately denied it. One has the impression that Brahminism gained and Buddhism lost too little for the contest to be worth their while. Nevertheless, the discussion about the *Āpauruṣheyatva* of the *Vedas* occupies a great length of Brahminical as well as Buddhist apologetical treatises, and evidently it had a deeper significance and importance to both sides.

The question where this significance

and this importance are to be sought, can be answered, I think, in the following way: The decisive moment for the Brahminical position was the consciousness of the historical connection with the old-Vedic religion. In later times, there remained only a little of this oldest tradition. But this does not alter the fact of an extremely strong feeling of organic unity of all phases of the Brahminical synthesis. Brahminism had been growing in the course of centuries, and the unity of tradition was the only link that bound together the most heterogeneous elements. The *Vedas* were the starting point of this evolution; he who eliminated them, destroyed consequently the whole structure erected on this foundation.

So, side by side with this tolerance as an essential characteristic of Brahminism, should be mentioned its *traditionalism*, conserving all that "was once upon a time", providing that this past was a part of the frame-work of the Aryo-Indian history. It is clear that this historicism painfully delimited the universalism of Brahminism as a religious system. Its benefits are accorded only to the Hindus and the entry into the Hindu society was possible through the portals of Indian history alone. He who is outside these portals can hope to be reborn in one of the Hindu castes, and in this sense, in Brahminism eternally damned souls are unknown. But in reality, a non-Hindu has hardly any chance of salvation. There is no doubt that for the most classical schools, *Mukti* is a matter of birth and race.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> This is at any rate, the opinion of Sankara. Rāmānuja is more democratic; he distinguishes between *Bhakti* and *Prapatti*. The right *Bhakti* is accessible only by the twice born. Contrarily, *Prapatti* is open to all creatures not excluding the Sudras. The doctrine that souls have to pass through a series of lower religions before they are ripe for the highest one, is met with in the *Saiva-Siddhānta*.

All dreams about Brahminism being a world religion are consequently alien to it. Just as its geographical horizon was limited to the Jambudvīpa, so also its religious universalism was restricted to all religions of Indian origin. The first step towards true universalism in Ancient India was taken by Buddhism and not by Brahminism.

In conclusion, we may return to the belief that the same Highest Truth and the same Divinity is expressed by many different cults and religions. Are there any analogous instances in the Western civilization? Prof. Max Weber in his *Religionssociologische Aussätze* has cited the case of the Roman religion in the Imperial epoch, when side by side with Latin and Greek gods, Isis, Serapis, Cybele, Attis and the Syrian Baals were adored. This similarity, however, is rather superficial. All those cults never formed one consistent system but a chaos of concurrent fragments; they were of foreign origin and did not form parts of the same indigenous tradition; and lastly they were symptoms of decadence and decomposition and not of the strength and vitality of Roman religion. Nor is there a parallel in the theory of the 18th century rationalists, according

to which, by purging the existing dogmatics and confessionalistic theologies of all superstitions, deformations and misconceptions, a common kernel of "natural religion" could be unhusked. Need we explain that this "natural religion" was not at all a religion but a very poor and diluted metaphysical scheme? And that the true essence of religious phenomena has been sought for even in these purged away "de-formations", in cults and rituals, in myths, in beliefs in saints and devils, in miracles etc.? It should be reiterated here that Brahminism never treated cults and myths, even in their most primitive forms, as superstitions of no value. Sankara, one of the most philosophical brains of India was at the same time an ardent Saivite and worshipper of the Mother Goddess, and this combination, curious though it may be, is rather the rule than the exception in Hinduism.

The Indian ideology of tolerance is without precedence in the Western world. We can add that in spite of attempts made by theologians, it has no chance of being assimilated anywhere in Europe. European religiosity is always intolerant, European tolerance is always irreligious.

## THE SACRIFICE OF GOD

By DR. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR, M.A., PH.D.

There are times in the world's history when the direct intervention of the Divine in human affairs is necessary. The worn-out civilization requires reinforcement of new life and vision that humanity may rejuvenate itself and go on moulding its final destiny making it fit for a more dignified expression. The world-forces are moving today with such a rapidity that intervention of the Divine has become imperative in order

that civilization can be saved from a sure collapse.

The want of Christ is the real want of life today—Christ, the messenger of Peace and Love. We should now evaluate properly the values of forces that are moulding our destiny. Today almost all the forces, vital and mental are vigorously active in life, and all human skill and ingenuity in Science and Philosophy are shown at their best.

But still the civilization is trembling in the balance. New political schemes and social devices are in the field to make up for the imperfect social orders of the past—but still happiness and peace are to be seen nowhere, and everybody experiences bitterness in life.

European civilization with all its constructions stands today in the melting-pot. And since Europe is leading the civilization today its worries have brought in worries for the whole humanity. Europe has failed miserably in giving a lead to civilization and it is high time that Asia should think seriously of her programme in life and take her inspiration from the lost page in her history. Asia has given to the world her great religions. It has given the message of the cosmic humanity. Europe has never been able to outgrow her national aspirations, and even if it has established Empires in all corners of the globe it has not been able to inspire any of the dependent countries with unswerving faith in her ideals for, excepting material prosperity and welfare, she has not given any idea recently which can inspire human heart in cosmic sympathies and love. Europe with all her culture cannot forsake materialistic prosperity and aggrandizement. That has been the curse of European civilization.

Europe claims to be Christian in outlook but behind the grand priestly organization in fellowship with the state Europe has not shown much appreciation of the life and teaching of the Divine Harbinger of Peace and Love—Christ. Today in world-civilization the need of Christ has been a real need. Divine love can only give today the saving and cementing force. The world has grown so much intellectual today that the heart has been dried up and with it the divine love and force have been dismissed from life. The divine

touch has become necessary today more than science and metaphysics. Science may give distant glimpses into the architect of the universe, Metaphysics a calm rational understanding of the scheme of knowledge and the scheme of the Eternal plan of things. But when confusion reigns in the very basic foundation of being what can save is not speculative knowledge but that divine understanding and vision which can see the dignity of human existence and its direct connection with the divine life. The understanding of the human life as enthralled in the divine love and ultimately divine in nature is what today is wanted. Science cannot give this direct appeal nor metaphysics can give the direct vision. We cannot find out the Light that never fails in the heart of our being to find the correct inspiration. The flame that constantly burns within us is sometimes removed from our gaze because of the grossness of our being but in world's history there have been teachers whose example and influence can never be lost and in difficult times the world can do no better than receive inspiration from them. The world-situation reminds us today of the Prince of Love. And we can do no better than think of Him and his sacrifices for the uplift of humanity.

Christ's message of life eternal in his resurrection has deep significance. It gives the promise of life. It gives the defeat of death and the victory of life.

The eternal emergence of life gives us faith and hope and bears us through the difficulties with calm composure of being. The resurrection of Christ symbolizes the continuity of life through all changes and vicissitudes. The message of Immortality has been given by philosophers on theoretical grounds. But Christ has demonstrated it in experience and through his own example taught

the principle of the **Eternal Re-emergence of life**. Christ is the prophet of creative life. Life is ever fresh, ever green, death and sufferings are shibboleths. But this eternity of life, its freshness, and vigour, its beauties and dignities, can be felt only when we can have our Christ-like attitude in us, when we are really in touch with the great divine formative principle through all beings and things.

But if Christ is a prophet of creative life he is also a prophet of Love. Life and Love go together. Life gives Love and Love gives Life. Christ stands between man and God. His is the divine love that lifts up and elevates. He is the Godward force that directs humanity to its final goal of existence and lifts it up from inertia for Christ is that which saves and redeems. This human picture of Christ is touching. The transcendental love of God could be hardly understood without such a divine personality of Christ. God is an eternal mystery to man. His knowledge and power may be visible through creation but His nature as a source of the world is only evidenced through the boundless ocean of Love of a Buddha or a Christ. God as Love is incarnated in flesh.

But from this we should not subscribe to the doctrine that Christ is the only son of God and none else can enjoy that dignified privilege. Evolution in man has not come to a still—there is a constant urge in man to realize his potential dignities for the man has never been separated from God, and his full consummation lies in being fully conscious of his divine nature. Christ is the forerunner of this Truth and He is an incarnation in the sense that he felt his conscious unity with Godhead. When one feels like Christ one can say also with Christ, "I am the life. I am the Light." This eternal privilege is given to all men

but when that privilege is fully understood and consciously realized man becomes God. He begins to exhibit a superior personality, divine powers and wisdom and can speak with a categorical definiteness about the existence of God and His direct intervention in human affairs.

Love is a great force of cohesion in existence. In the physical universe it is manifested in the form of attraction, and in animal creation it appears as a force of protection and creation. But the divine love cannot be exhibited unless evolution proceeds further in man and woman to show the sacrificing nature of God for the protection, elevation, and uplift of humanity. This redeeming love of God can only be focussed in souls that are spiritually sensitive. And such souls naturally scatter divine radiance and influence thus promising to man his great possibilities as a son of God. The Sonship of God in the case of Christ is not only a matter of intellectual understanding but a conviction born of feeling and direct knowledge. Christ could speak in a positively affirmative way because he had the conviction born of knowledge. Incarnation has a spiritual value because in such souls we can get divine touches and effulgences which are not in any other way possible. Incarnation indicates the direction of human evolution. It shows that man with his proper aspiration can realize the direct touch with God and be finally the medium of expression of the divine life on earth.

Whatever interpretation may be put upon the doctrine of incarnation, whether it is the ascent of the human soul or the descent of the holy spirit in man, the truth cannot be lost upon us that it indicates a high order and a finer evolution of existence. The doctrine of incarnation is common with all

religions; and the Tantricism will interpret such a phenomenon as the awakening in man of the finer psychic and supramental possibilities hidden in us. The Vaishnavas and the Tantrics conceive the descent of the divine power in man from the finer spheres of existence through our psychic bodies. The divine power is potential in us but unless the psychic in man will be active we cannot be put in direct connection with the Divine. When the psychic is truly active and fruitfully effective, man realizes his higher nature in Divinity and exhibits extraordinary powers and intelligence.

This perhaps will explain the secret of the personality of Christ. Christ had an inspiring and over-powering personality—a personality that used to captivate and command. None could deny him not alone because of his love but sometimes because of his masterful nature. It is but natural that this personality is a true index of the divine nature of man.

The greatness of his personality has been the object of criticism. Few could understand its grandeur. Many see in the overpowering personality of Christ a defect and a weakness and compares him unfavourably with Socrates. The appeal of Socrates was to the reason of man. He used to give understanding and therefore his language was the language of philosophy diving deep into the secrets of thought. But Christ used to inspire by life. He used to change human hearts and remove inertia and darkness of ages by his very presence and touch. He carried with him a divine aroma of life and established an intense atmosphere of high spirituality and love. He illumined understanding by opening the divine insight, by moving the finer chords of life. Christ was the prophet of life and the final knowledge comes through opening in life. Christ

had a humility like Socrates but the humility used to carry with it also a divine dignity, for in him was unified the blessed harmony of the human and the divine. His conviction of the great touch of God was not merely an intellectual conviction but it was a conviction of life. His faith proceeds from the illumined vision of life oriented, supported, rejuvenated in spirit. Men of understanding do not always possess this power of spirit. Christ's personality was highly strung in spirit and he could therefore speak directly of the Kingdom of God, the Divine mercy, the eternal resurrection of life with a majestic form and appeal. Even the best human understanding is not of much avail in this sphere of intuition and faith. The greatest mind stumbles in this height of existence, for what is a matter of inference and indirect envisagement to them was a matter of direct vision to Christ. The greatest problem of human life is the search after God. Philosophers from Plato downwards have given us theories, illumined understandings, but none of them could carry conviction to the soul and strengthen the heart, for in the matter of spiritual conviction something more than rational understanding is needed and the love of God most certainly does never proceed from a logical setting. The fervour in religion proceeds from the direct appeal it has to the human heart, for after all men can never be satisfied with nothing less than a God that inspires life, gives Light, and removes darkness.

Herein lies the Truth of Grace and Mercy as great factors in the dynamics of spiritual life. Christ gives to humanity the law of Grace, and Grace emerges from the anxious solicitude of God for the redemption of man. Christ promises the heavenly life of man and that apparently becomes possible



through the divine attraction and uplift through Grace more surely and unfailingly than by any other method. He promises the eternal hope for man in bewildering darkness and conflicts of life. Grace fills us in faith and hope.

And this was demonstrated by him on the Cross. When all human friendship failed him, when no divine protection was visible in the enshrouding mystery towards the close of his life—he was kept up by the Faith and in an unmistakable voice gave the lasting proof of his firm conviction in the existence of God and in the Supremacy of His will. The last days of his life proved his greatness and his dynamic identification with the Divine as nothing else could do. The vivid consciousness of the Divine together with the power that *faith* brought in could uphold him through the worst trials that could befall a man. His embrace of the Cross proves that he died not in vain. And without entering defence he surrendered to the inevitable with a clear faith that death could not kill him. The spirit of Christ is the spirit of immortality, and he could face death so easily because he had the conviction of eternal life. God fulfils His mission on earth often through trying circumstances in the life of the Son of God. Christ passed through the worst sufferings and miseries with a smiling face, thus indicating the victory of spirit over the stings of flesh. In his life is written clearly the triumph of spirit throughout. His life is thus the divine record of the message of hope and eternal life. Man suffers most from sufferings and death, and the life of Christ is a great reminder that they are not the last events in the sojourn of life.

In Christ there were three movements of spirit manifested in the aspiration for the Divine, a union with Him and a divine expression through him. The

aspiration indicates his true seeking—a seeking which would enable him even to forego the comforts of the protection of his mother. Christ was conscious from the beginning of his life of the Godward movement of his soul and of the great mission for which he was sent here. This consciousness really marks out his genius—a consciousness which was intensified at times by deep concentration and meditation (e.g. in the garden of Gethsemane). This could establish the complete union with the Divine as it does in every man seeking a fellowship with God. This union at times grows so intense that he could hardly feel any distance between him and his beloved. “I and my Father are one.” Here Christ gives the utterance testifying to his finest spiritual consummation. Christ’s life indicates dynamical spiritual personality through three stages, of seeking and aspiring, of merging his personality in union, and final conviction of the identity of the Divine and the human. But this identity in Christ is the realization of the dynamical identification, and his spirit, therefore, manifests God not only in transcendence, but more actively in His immanence. The life of Christ is not the life that brushes away all problems of life by declaring it an illusion and is not the life that is satisfied with the realization of the divine silence or calm but it is a life that participates actively in the problem of concrete existence and offers solution to it by the law of Faith and Hope as God is not distant. He is here actively helping men.

Christ is the active spirit which is at work to bring down the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. To Him there is no distance between the two—only the human heart is to make its preparation for seeing and receiving it. Christ stands here as the great connecting link between the Kingdom of God and earth.

To establish a Kingdom of Heaven on earth requires a fitness of the heart. Heart is the organ through which one can understand the spiritual relationship between man and man, and between man and God. "Blessed are those that are pure in heart for they shall see God." Christ did not urge upon fine intellectual flowering as the necessary qualification for receiving the light of God in life. He makes the divine life easy and accessible to everybody, for heart is the organ through which Divinity reveals Itself to man. This saying of Christ is today negatively demonstrated. The supremacy of intellect is visible everywhere. But the human heart is shrinking and the result is that humanity with all its scientific inventions has not made the life the better for it.

To install God in life the heart should be open not only unto God, but it should open unto humanity. We should feel God not only in our upward ascent. We should seek Him here on earth through everything mortal. The love of God cannot be well established unless the love of man is deeply felt by us. Christ therefore urges upon us to love our neighbour as ourselves. The law of love makes our being elastic and responsive to the finer currents of the soul. It makes us feel the vibrating life and the radiant love through every heart and the victory of love is not attained unless we love man in God and God in man. The sermon on the Mount gives us the clear conditions for the divine heritage and the divine life upon earth; and Christ's genius reveals this law of love in everything as the ultimate cementing and integrating bond. Love rules in heaven. Christ wants it to rule on earth. And unless the dignity of love and its divine nature are fully apprehended and well-established in life the transformation of earth into heaven is a dream.

The law of love has its counterpart and corollary—"Resist not evil."

The law of resistance is a human law. It conquers, but it cannot transform. Love conquers as well as transforms. The affairs in life are regulated by the law of resistance. Evil is suppressed but it is not completely rooted out. Christ had the divine vision that resistance could only drive the devil more into our being but love completely conquers it and transforms it by its power and influence, for love is at work with sin and ignorance, and the tension will go on so long as love has not been completely victorious in its earthly expression. The seeming victory of the obstructive forces makes one doubtful about the final victory of love, but this doubt is also born of ignorance. Love is the actuality of life and without love earthly life is also impossible. Love has already established itself in human life and shows its tenacity and firmness but what is now wanted is the divinization of love or the understanding that love in its essence is divine, and the more this understanding becomes clear to us, the more security is established within us. And the resistance of evil will be a dream with the complete victory and establishment of love on earth. Freedom can be wrought not through opposition as offering resistance but by opening out the channel of expression of the divine love.

What is needed today in human civilization is this divine love. Scientists and philosophers speak of the principle of cohesion running through the world from its crudest expression in the life of atom to its finest expression in the life of human society. But the dividing factors are still at work to form various classes. But the higher evolution in man should thresh out the universal integrating bond of the divine love and give us

the foretaste of divine life. The emergence of love will automatically help the emergence of the society of spirits bringing peace unto earth. The tension and the resistance that are ordinarily felt in life and which seem to give the salt into it are associated with our egoistic clings, but with the ushering in of divine love we shall move with greater freedom, with a finer elasticity of our being. Resistance and tension belong to the gross side of our nature and the more the self is free from them, the better. It can then realize the spontaneous movement of spirit without the least

resistance. It will then be free from egoism but its movement and activity will then be joyful expression of its being. The earthly consciousness will then be replaced by divine consciousness, the fullness of which we cannot now envisage for the law of higher evolution in man is not completely established in us. But it can sprout up by the inspiration of Christ. Christ gives us the model for the emergence of humanity into the Kingdom of Spirit. Christ lives for the ideal. His death makes that promise clear. The sacrifice of God is necessary to save humanity today.

## LOCKE'S IDEAS OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

By DR. DEBENDRA CHANDRA DASGUPTA, M.A., Ed.D. (California)

John Locke lived during the last three quarters of the seventeenth century, from 1632 to 1704. He possessed a versatile genius and for many years was active in the stormy political life of his day. He is best known, however, as a philosopher. He wrote on various subjects including politics, philosophy, and education. Changes in the political situation of England unfavourable to Locke forced him to go in exile to Holland in 1683. After the revolution of 1688 he returned to England and soon was back in political life. The seventeenth century was a period of reaction against the theory of divine right of kings. Locke threw himself openly into the reactionary movement and advocated the divine right of the people. Although a great champion of the divine right of the people, Locke still adhered to the monarchical form of government. He believed in a limited monarchy. According to his philosophy the king derived his power from the consent of the people and the power of each suc-

ceeding king depended on the consent of his people. This was known as the contract theory. In his development of this theory Locke gave little place to individualism. The individual was made subordinate to the state. Consequently Locke's educational theory also set forth the welfare of the state as the main objective of education.

In addition to his reaction against monarchical government of the absolute type Locke lent his pen in protest against the formalized humanistic education which characterized the seventeenth century. He advocated educating all the people, whether of the nobility or of the poorer classes to be good citizens. In order to accomplish this he recommended that education should not consist of a useless mass of facts but should rather include such matters as would have a direct bearing upon the life one was to live in society. Hence Locke has been classed by the writers of the history of education as a social realist.

Because of his conviction that education should be directly related to the position one was to hold in society Locke's theory of education embodied different immediate objectives, means and methods of training for the upper classes and the labouring classes. The gentleman was to receive a broad general education consisting of training in the vernacular, French, Latin, the natural sciences, manual arts, and in the rudiments of the professions in order that they might assume leadership in the state. The members of the labouring class were to receive training in the trades and industries in order that they might become self-supporting citizens of the state and self-respecting members of society. Locke did not deal with the education of the middle class. He confined his attention to the extreme classes in society, the rich and the poor.

With this brief statement of Locke's attitude toward the general educational situation we may now turn to a consideration of the place of vocational education in Locke's educational philosophy.

The main source from which the data concerning Locke's views with respect to vocational education have been collected is his essay entitled "Some thoughts Concerning the Education of a Gentleman" published in 1693. Originally this essay was a series of letters written in Holland while Locke was in exile and addressed to his friend Edward Clarke concerning the education of his children. At the request of another friend William Molyneux, these letters were assembled and published in essay form. The essay on "Conduct of the Understanding" written in 1697 and published in 1706 also contains some observations on education which have been consulted. These essays are to be found in John William Adamson's edi-

tion of "The Educational Writings of John Locke". Another source used is Locke's memorandum regarding Poor Law reform and the establishment of working schools. This memorandum is not available in its original and complete form but lengthy extracts therefrom are cited in volume two of "The Life of John Locke" by H. R. Fox Bourne.

The basic principles of Locke's educational philosophy bear striking resemblance to those of Rabelais.<sup>1</sup> Both Rabelais and Locke advocated the Renaissance ideal of education as a means of training both the mind and body, an ideal which was lost sight of in the formalized education of the later Renaissance. Concerning this ideal Locke wrote, "A sound mind in a sound body is a short but full description of a happy state in the world."<sup>2</sup> However, although agreeing in this basic principle the two educators differed with respect to the means by which this ideal was to be realized. With Rabelais manual arts found little place in the physical training of a gentleman. He advocated manual arts only to supplement the encyclopædic knowledge of the gentleman. Locke, on the other hand, advocated manual arts not so much for the sake of culture or encyclopædic knowledge as to train the body. Both agreed that knowledge should come through sense perception but Rabelais advocated recourse to ancient writers to supplement the knowledge gained through the senses. Locke would have none of this. Rabelais aimed to give a gentleman an acquaintance with all the trades but mastery of none. Locke purposed to give gentle-

<sup>1</sup> See the writer's article on "Rabelais an exponent of modernism in educational philosophy". *Prabuddha Bharata*, January, 1935.

<sup>2</sup> John William Adamson, *The Educational writings of John Locke*, p. 25.

men a good general knowledge of two or three trades and specific training in one. Although these and other points of difference between Locke and Rabelais might be noted, on the whole Locke agreed with Rabelais in criticizing the formalized education of the later Renaissance and in advocating training gentlemen in the manual arts and professions as a preparation for positions of leadership in the state.

Locke's whole theory of vocational education is based upon his doctrine of a sound mind in a sound body. He attempted through his ideal curriculum of literary studies, natural sciences, manual arts, and professional courses to establish a proper balance between mind and body. During the later, formalized Renaissance of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the schools and colleges of Europe were the theatres for rehearsing young gentlemen in humanistic studies. The scholars were trained to frame polished sentences in Latin and in Greek and to imitate the purest classical style. All the activities of these later schools were directed towards mental exercise and very little was done for the physical development of the pupils. It was as a protest against the inhuman practices of these schools that Locke advocated education in the manual arts as a means of training the body. It is to be borne in mind, however, that Locke always advocated linguistic, scientific, and professional study as the main part of the education of a gentleman. Manual arts were only supplementary subjects for the purpose of recreating and refreshing the mind and to develop bodily health and vigour. "A gentleman's more serious employment I look on to be study; and when that demands relaxation and refreshment, it should be in some exercise of

the body, which unbends the thought and confirms the health and strength."<sup>3</sup>

We must also bear in mind that the value of developing skill in the manual arts themselves was not lost sight of by Locke and that he advocated using them for this purpose as well as for physical discipline. "Thus skill not only in languages and learned sciences, but in painting, turning, gardening, tempering and working in iron, and all other useful arts is worth the having."<sup>4</sup>

Locke advocated the time immediately following a study of the major subjects as being the most suitable period for learning the manual arts. At such times the mind would be fatigued from serious study and would need the refreshment which this change of employment would afford. He suggested that at these times the young gentlemen should learn the various occupations by actual participation on the farm or in the workshop. Thus by a sort of apprenticeship they would master the various arts and occupations in everyday use. This work should be bound to bring pleasure and happiness to the learner and enable him to use profitably time which otherwise might be wasted in idleness or debauchery. "To the arts above mentioned may be added perfuming, varnishing, graving, and several sorts of working in iron, brass, and silver; and if, as it happens to most young gentlemen, that a considerable part of his time be spent in a great town, he may learn to cut, polish, and set precious stones, or employ himself in grinding and polishing optical glasses. Amongst the great variety there is of ingenious manual arts, 'twill be impossible that no one will be found to please and delight him, . . . And

<sup>3</sup> John William Adamson, *The Educational Writings of John Locke*, p. 170.

<sup>4</sup> John William Adamson, *The Educational Writings of John Locke*, p. 169.

since he cannot be always employed in reading, study, and conversation, there will be many an hour, besides what his exercises will take up which if not spent this way, will be spent worse."<sup>5</sup>

In addition to training in manual arts the programme of vocational education for gentlemen included professional courses in civil law, law, merchants' accounts, and short hand. These studies were regarded as of sufficient value and importance to be reckoned as an integral part of the regular educational programme of a gentleman. They were to be pursued for economic as well as for social and cultural purposes. The following paragraphs will indicate the importance which Locke attached to each of these subjects.

Knowledge of civil law was considered especially valuable to a young gentleman as it would enable him to fill an important position in the state and to command the respect and esteem of his fellowmen in the world. Therefore he should study thoroughly the origin and foundations of society, and the rights and duties of man in society. He should become equally proficient in international law in order to understand properly international relations. For a mastery of this field he should study the various ancient writers on international law such as Grotius, and Puffendorf. "When he has pretty well digested Tully's offices (and add to it "Puffendorf, *de officio hominis et civis*"), it may be reasonable to set him upon "Grotius *de jure belli et pacis*", or, which perhaps is the better of the two, "Puffendorf *de jure naturali et gentium*," wherein he will be instructed in the natural rights of man, and the original foundations of society, and the duties resulting from thence. This general part of civil law and history,

are studies which a gentleman should not barely touch at, but constantly dwell upon and never have done with. A virtuous and well-behaved young man, that is well versed in the general part of the civil law (which concerns not the chicane of private cases, but the affairs and intercourse of civilized nations in general, grounded upon principles of reason), understands Latin well, and can write a good hand, one may turn loose into the world, with great assurance that he will find employment and esteem everywhere."<sup>6</sup>

Law was regarded by Locke as a very important field of study for a young gentleman ambitious to hold any position in England, from justice of the peace to minister of the state. Law would be invaluable in assisting one to ascertain right and wrong. With a view to the mastery of law one should study both the ancient and modern writers on the English constitution and Government.<sup>7</sup>

Locke advocated that gentlemen should become proficient in the operation of merchants' accounts in order that they might be able the more wisely to manage their expenditures and to keep their property from becoming ruined.<sup>8</sup>

Shorthand was likewise looked upon as a necessary accomplishment for a gentleman. A knowledge of this would prove a great personal convenience, especially in the matter of confidential writings.<sup>9</sup>

Our discussion thus far has revealed that Locke's theory of vocational education for gentlemen had a dual aspect. He recommended training in manual arts to relax the mind and strengthen

<sup>5</sup> John William Adamson, *The Educational Writings of John Locke*, pp. 151-152.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 152.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 173-174.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 124.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 173.

the body, and training in various professional courses for personal gain and the better discharge of one's civic duties. We must now give some consideration to Locke's theory of vocational education for members of the poorer classes.

Locke advocated giving the working people a thorough training in trade and religion. He deemed it sufficient for them to know their trade and to be religiously devout and submissive. Thus they would prove to be good citizens of the commonwealth. Here we see social aristocracy as an important determinant in occupational selections. The great multitudes of poor people were to be kept forever on a low social level and given enough trade training to enable them to earn their bread and butter, and enough religious training for their moral well-being.

"For a man to understand fully the business of his particular calling in the commonwealth, and of religion, which is his calling as he is a man in the world, is usually enough to take up his whole time."<sup>10</sup>

Paupers and beggars were considered wards of the state. It was the duty of the state to eliminate pauperism and vagrancy by giving to paupers and beggars trade and technical education in working schools. Everyone must be made a self-respecting and self-supporting citizen in the commonwealth. And to be a good citizen one must receive proper training in trade, industry, and religion. This training was to be given under state supervision and the state had the right to compel attendance at working schools on the part of pauper children. All such children between three and fourteen years of age were to be compelled to attend such schools. "The most effec-

tual remedy for this that we are able to conceive, and which, we therefore humbly propose, is, that in the fore-mentioned new law to be enacted, it be further provided that working schools be set up in every parish, to which the children of all such as demand relief of the parish, above three and under fourteen years of age, whilst they live at home with their parents, and are not otherwise employed for their livelihood by the allowance of the overseers of the poor, shall be obliged to come."<sup>11</sup> These working schools were to be trade schools giving instruction in the various trades such as spinning, knitting, or woolen manufacture. The working school was also to adjust its curriculum to the particular needs of the local districts. After the completion of vocational training, pauper children were to be placed on jobs by the local guardians of the poor as apprentices either to a handicrafts man, or to a gentleman, yeoman, farmer or to a master of the Kingship."<sup>12</sup> Thus Locke's theory of vocational education for the poor people regarded pauperism and vagrancy as a curse to society which must be wiped out by imparting a compulsory trade training to all paupers by means of local working schools.

In conclusion one may say that in his theory of education Locke advocated vocational training for the two extreme classes in society, the leisured class and the poverty-stricken class. For the wealthy a twofold vocational training was recommended consisting of (1) training in the manual arts through actual participation and for the purpose of relaxing the mind, building up physical and mental vigour, and the acquisition of mental manual skill; and (2)

<sup>10</sup> H. R. Fox Bourne, *The Life of John Locke*, Vol. II, p. 383.

<sup>11</sup> John William Adamson, *The Educational Writings of John Locke*, p. 215.

<sup>12</sup> H. R. Fox Bourne, *The Life of John Locke*, Vol. II, pp. 385-386, 390.

training in various professional courses to be carried on as a part of the general education of the gentleman for the purpose of equipping him the better to discharge his public and private duties. And in all his suggestions Locke constantly kept in mind the maintaining of a proper balance between mind and body. For poor people Locke recommended training in the trades and

religion. He asserted it to be the duty of the state to provide such training as would be calculated to remove vagrancy and pauperism from society and to make each person a self-respecting and self-supporting citizen. He further asserted it to be the right of the state to compel the attendance of paupers at working schools in order that these ends might be achieved.

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## ILLUSION-MAKER

BY EVE VERMONDE

I am the monolith of the absolute,  
 The subjugation of the primal fear,—  
 Fulfillment imperceptible;  
 I am the marvel of embodiment,  
 The pith of all consciousness,  
 The lotus flower of unity between the visible and intangible;  
 I am the mother-milk of fruition  
 And the ultimate *uncreate*, darkly garlanded;  
 The metabolism of renewal and liberation—  
 Complacent, contemplative—  
 The atoning avowal beyond  
 Shadowy lintels of oblivion:  
 I am the vibrant, invisible alchemy of spirit,—  
 White inertia of peace,  
 A truce with Nothingness.

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# THE EXPANSION OF SPIRITUALITY AS A FACT OF INDUSTRIAL CIVILIZATION

BY PROF BENOX KUMAR SARKAR

## MAN THE WORLD-CONQUEROR

Born in Burma or Bermuda, Britain or Bengal, human beings have the same problem everywhere. And the problem, in so far as it is human, has remained virtually identical all through the ages. Man as an individual or in groups has had but one function, and that is to transform the gifts of the world into which he is born, namely, Nature and society, into the instruments of human and social welfare. It is not Nature, region or geography that in the last analysis determines man's destiny. It is the human will, man's energy, that re-creates the topography and natural forces, humanizes the earth and spiritualizes the geography. Then, again, it is not the group, the clan, the nation or the society that ultimately forces the individual to submit to the social *milieu*, the group *mores*, the tradition, and the *status quo*. It is the individual personality that compels the *mores* to change and the *milieu* to break, that subverts the *status quo* and re-forms the tradition.<sup>1</sup>

Both anthropologically and psychologically it has been the factual nature of man to function as a "transformer" and re-creator. The ideal of man, historically and inductively considered, is not peace but restlessness. The Hindu

*Aitareya Brâhmana* (VII, 15) caught the right view of progress and culture when it taught in so many words that *nânâ-srântâya srirasti* (prosperity is not for the person that is not tired with movements and wanderings). The correct attitude to life and the universe is equally well portrayed in the frank declaration of the man of the *Atharva Veda* (XII, i, 54) to Earth as follows :

"Aham asmi sahamâna  
Uttaro nâma bhûmiyâm  
Abhisâdasmi visvâsâd  
Âsâm âsâm visasahi."

(Mighty am I, Superior by name, upon the Earth, conquering am I, all-conquering, completely conquering every region).

In modern times the Siegfrieds of Heibel's dramas and Wagner's operas in the *Nibelung* cycle have but demonstrated the old Hindu *Weltanschauung* (world-view). The great intellectual gymnast of the nineteenth century, Robert Browning, was again echoing the same sentiment when he pointed out that "thus we half-men struggle."

## RELIGION ETERNAL AS AN EXPRESSION OF SPIRITUALITY

Of all the instruments created by man in order to minister to the needs of individual and group life neither the most nor the least effective is the instrument conventionally known as religion. It is the creations by man that count, and religion is but one of the thousand

<sup>1</sup> B. K. Sarkar: *The Science of History and the Hope of Mankind* (London, 1912), *The Folk-Element in Hindu Culture* (London, 1917) and *The Futurism of Young Asia* (Berlin, 1922).

and one expressions of his creative power.<sup>2</sup>

Creative man or man as a creator is spiritual by nature and as a matter of course. Creativeness and spirituality are convertible terms. Non-spiritual man is a contradiction in terms because non-creative man has not been known to exist. The world has been witnessing the emergence and expansion of spirituality ever since the first man exercised his creative *shakti* or might, i.e., sought to establish his sway over the forces in Nature and human society.

The world today has got used to the concept that inventions are as old as mankind, and that therefore technocracy and economic life are coeval with the human race. We have now to take another step forward in the conception of man's conquests over the universe,—by admitting that all these technical and economic creations are at bottom spiritual. Palaeolithic man was spiritual in so far as he was creative. The spiritual urge, the craving for creation, the will to conquer, is eternal in human history and fundamental in the human *psyche*,—the very bed-rock of personality.

Some twenty thousand years ago the Aurignacian forefathers of the human race constructed flints of all shapes and sizes as well as arrowheads of all sorts. They knew how to "manufacture" also ivory bracelets out of the mammoth's tusk and necklaces with perforated wolves' teeth. In an inventory of the values created by man the sociologist cannot afford to note exclusively these and allied items of objective utility. The cultural ap-

praiser will have also to observe that drawings and paintings,—i.e. somewhat "idealistic" goods,—belonged likewise to the achievements of Aurignacian "civilization." Another "great power" of the Stone Age, the Azilians, produced experts in the painting of stones. The primitive painters and sculptors of mankind are to be credited with the faculty of seeing the "light that never was on sea or land" and trying to exhibit the "life beyond." They are the progenitors of the makers of gods and goddesses among the Pharaohs, Assyro-Babylonians, Mycenæans and Mohenjo Daro "Hindus". To the extent that religion implies the creation of unseen agencies and the bodying forth of mystical forces by imagination it is hardly possible to conceive a non-religious or "pre-religious" *stratum* of human evolution,—Lévy-Bruhl's assertions in *La Mythologie Primitive* notwithstanding. In other words, as a form or expression of spirituality, religion, even in its idealistic aspects, is, like technocracy and economy, one of the most primitive creations of mankind.

The devotion, mysticism and "religious" reverence as evident in the African masks have been appropriately sung of by the American painter, Max Weber. One of his poems in *Primitives* (Poems and Wood-cuts) reads as follows :

"Mask Bampense Kasai,  
Crudely shaped and moulded art  
thou,  
In weighty varied solid frightful form,  
Through thy virility, brutality and  
blackness,  
I gain insight subtle and refined.  
Then 'tis true, Kasai, that the sculptor  
in thy making,

<sup>2</sup> This position is fundamentally opposed to that of the monistic religious interpretations of life and culture as popularized by Fustel de Coulanges (*La Cité Antique*), Max Weber (*Religionssoziologie*), and others; cf. P. Sorokin: *Contemporary Sociological Theories* (New York, 1928), pp. 662-696.

<sup>3</sup> Quennell: *Everyday Life in the Old Stone Age* (London), Marshall: *Mohenjo Daro and the Indus Civilisation* (London, 1931).

Was not the jungle savage,  
 But high spirited and living soul.  
 In carving thy features, Bampense  
 Kasai,  
 In the crudest geometric form,  
 Thy savage maker makes an art,  
 At once untrifling, big and powerful.  
 Surely not ignorance but fear and  
 love and spirit high  
 Made him make you, Bampense  
 Kasai."

The "primitives" of the past as the undeveloped or "backwards" of today undoubtedly deserve such homages to their "high spirited and living soul."

#### MODERN RELIGIONS

"Forms" of technique as well as of economy have often changed initiating "industrial revolution" upon "industrial revolution," but man's creativeness, i.e., spirituality has kept on its more or less even tenor. Exactly in the same manner has religion changed its forms with the races, the regions and the epochs. Religion has come and religion has gone, but spirituality or man's rôle as creator of values has gone on for ever in this field as in the others.

It should therefore be possible to assert that the spirituality of man has been growing from more to more along with the advances in human creativeness. The expansion of spirituality is a most perceptible human or social fact of modern culture, "materialistic," industrialized, and capitalistic as it is usually known to be. Mankind today is perhaps more spiritual than it ever was.

It is not only the tools, implements, machines and super-machines that belong to the range of man's creations during the last few generations of technocracy and capitalism. But as during the Palæolithic and following epochs modern man has created other

values as well. The gods, goddesses or God, the hymns, prayers, rituals, sermons, dissertations and lectures etc. created by modern religions in the East and the West are not less numerous and varied than in the past. And they point to at least as great, if not greater critical and rational as well as moral, humane and democratic attitudes of man *vis-à-vis* the fellow-men. The religious lore of modern mankind is born of a more soul-searching and profound spirituality than that of the previous generations.

#### THE NEW SPIRITUALITY IN SOCIAL INSURANCE AND POVERTY CONTROL

The expansion of man's spiritual consciousness in the social sphere,—which may indeed be characterized as the sphere of ethical attitudes and activities,—is one of the most signal achievements of the "industrial" civilization of today. To take only one instance, that of the "social insurance" of Bismarck and Lloyd George, comprising as it does the branches of insurance against sickness, maternity, accident, old age, invalidity, widowhood, orphanhood, and unemployment. The system of what may be called "neo-capitalism" and "neo-socialism" as embodied in state-controlled and partly state-financed social insurance is the characteristic of what for certain purposes ought properly to be described as the "second industrial revolution." The "first industrial revolution," which, for England, may be taken to be the phenomenon of 1785-1830 and, for France and Germany, of 1830-75, was the embodiment of orthodox or classical capitalism which used to treat labour according to the "iron law of wages." It evoked also orthodox or Marxian socialism in which capital was looked at from the viewpoint of class-struggle. In the *milieu* of social insurance as

prevalent in the world since the eighties of the last century the workingman is not antagonistic to capital but seeks to utilize it in his own interest. Nor does the employer feel antagonistic but renders himself somewhat amenable to the aspirations of labour. A platform of mutual give-and-take has been reared and the interests of the "two poles" have obtained the chance of getting harmonized in the joint interests of the community, the ideal of national solidarity.

The dignity of man was never preached more eloquently than by the medieval Bengali poet, Chandidâsa (c. 1850), who sang: *Sabâr upare mânus srestha, tâhâr upare nâi* (Superior to all is man, beyond or above him is nothing). The humanism and fraternity such as were thus developed in and through Vaishnavism are superb.

The tradition of Buddhist Asia knows that "the Bodhisattva gives up the best excellent good to the beings who are suffering from hunger and gives security to those beings who fear. He is full of zeal for the complete healing of the sick and bears the burden of those who are weary and exhausted." The Jains of India are nurtured in the doctrine of four gifts (*âhâr-âbhaya-bhaisajya-sâstradâna*), namely, those of food, courage, medicine, and learning.

Nevertheless, it will be admitted that those ideals of social equality and personal charity or philanthropy, which are found embodied in "Hindu," Confucian, Christian, Moslem and other institutions, have assumed tremendously effective shapes in the modern methods of poverty-control and social service as represented, for instance, by the welfare activities of trade unions and other bodies as well as by social insurance. The normal measures of poor relief in England and the extraordinary *Winterhilfe* (winter relief) of

Nazi Germany have been serving to revolutionize the world's conception of charity, fraternity, fellowship and social "solidarism."<sup>4</sup> The new spirituality is not less grand than the old, whatever it may have been.

#### SPIRITUAL ADVANCES THROUGH "UNKNOWN" RACES AND CLASSES

The emergence of new races and classes into prominence as creators of social values points likewise to the advances in spirituality and expansion of ethical sense as consummated by modern mankind. The recognition of the worth of the racial and social inferiors of yesterday is itself a mark of the contemporary expansion of social creativeness and spiritual reconstructions. The progress of man in "*conscience collective*," to use an expression of Durkheim, is an outstanding social fact in inter-group, inter-tribal, and inter-racial intercourse.

Comparative sociography forces upon our attention the operation of the most diverse creative forces such as are embodied in the experiences of the men and women of every region. Every people is thousand-handed, so to say, in its constructive and spiritualizing agencies.

In almost every district of North and West Bengal, for instance, the Santals have come to stay as agriculturists and are gradually becoming Bengalicized in language and social manners. Some Bengali-Santal blood-fusion is also in evidence. The contributions of the Santal, Garo and other "tribal" elements to the arts and crafts as well as the economic and religious structure of Eastern India deserve special attention. Another central fact of Hindu social morphology is the existence of

<sup>4</sup> B. K. Sarkar: "Winter Relief in Germany" and "Unemployment Insurance in England" (*Calcutta Review*, May, 1935 and 1936).

several million men and women belonging to the so-called "depressed" communities. Although depressed, they represent, be it noted at once, like the "tribes" none the less some of the most powerful forces that have contributed to the making of Indian culture. Further, the contributions of the "illiterates" to spirituality cannot by any means be ignored. Illiteracy does not necessarily mean ignorance, absence of brains, poverty in professional skill, proneness to criminality, or want of moral and society-building qualities. As long as the tribes, the depressed and the illiterates are employed in some agriculture, cottage industry, mine, factory, railway, fishing, boat-plying and what not they are getting themselves "educated" intellectually and technically in the very process of work. And in the daily interests of their tribal, neighbourhood or occupational life they are factually developing solid spiritual, social, civic and political virtues. The intellectual and moral discipline acquired by the illiterates on account of actual participation in life's work cannot be treated as of inferior grade in comparison with what the literates pick up in the elementary, secondary or collegiate institutions. Sociologically, it should be considered unscientific anywhere on earth to wait for universal literacy before thinking of endowing the illiterates, depressed and tribes with social and political privileges. It should rather be a first postulate to treat the masses as "educated" in every sense *minus* literacy as well as "creative" or spiritual in all spheres from cultivation and handicrafts to music and dance, engineering and commerce, heroes, gods and saints.

Many of the good or desirable biological "stocks" and "strains" remained unsuspected in the submerged and inconspicuous races and classes of the

world. The humanitarian, philanthropic, social reform and etatistic activities of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have enabled some of these "unknowns" to display their mettle and "fitness" in Eur-America. The evocation of "eugenic" forces by "social" means and methods is continuing its work still and constitutes a remarkable testimony to the evolution of spirituality in modern times. The rise of new nationalities in Eastern and Central Europe as well as the birth of a regenerated Russia under Soviet auspices are some of the processes through which the depressed, repressed and inferior of yesterday have been proving themselves to be the culture-bearers, spiritualizers and world-remakers of today.<sup>5</sup> The same process has been going on in India since the Mohenjo Daro times; and at the present moment as in the past the culture-creating strains such as have remained hidden or unobserved in the biological make-up of India's alleged lower classes, inferior castes and worthless communities are being provided with fresh opportunities for the assertion of spirituality by social, legal and political methods.

#### NEW ERAS OF SPIRITUALITY

From the Mohenjo Daro epochs (c. 3500 B.C.) down to the beginnings of the nineteenth century it was the rôle of the Bengali people mainly but to assimilate the creations of the non-Bengali races and peoples of India. The instances of the Bengali people as having left substantial marks of their own creations on the culture of Northern, Western and Southern India as well as of "Greater India," i.e., in areas

<sup>5</sup> T. G. Masaryk: *The Making of a State* (London 1927), K. Capek: *President Masaryk Tells His Story* (London 1934); *La Philosophie Tchécoslovaque Contemporaine* (Prague 1935).

uninhabited by the Bengalis during six thousand years down to Rammohun Roy (1772-1833) were very few and modest.

In the nineteenth century, then, the Bengalis were one of the youngest races of India in the domain of world-spirituality. The Ramakrishna-Vivekananda (1836-1902) movement represents a very significant landmark in human civilization, inasmuch as it started the Bengali people virtually for the first time on to what may be regarded as a career of *charaiveti* (march on) and world-conquests. A Bengali period of creative endeavours, spirituality and culture-history was thus seen to be in the making. It is in the *Sacred* movement of 1905 that the new creative and spiritual forces engendered by the Bengali people got recognized as a power among the powers in the world of culture. An interesting chronological coincidence,—but which points to the same sociological agencies as the birth of Young Bengal—is the simultaneous recognition of Japan as a world-power in the political and military fields. Present-day Bengal, like modern Japan, furnishes us with the sociological data bearing on new epochs or the beginnings of fresh eras in human creativeness and spirituality.

The beginnings of new epochs such as can be seen in the Japan and Bengal of "our own times" are but paralleled by such phenomena in the socio-cultural conditions of the German people during the period (1744-1835), say, from Herder to Humboldt.<sup>4</sup> It was then that for the first time German culture, still relatively "young" and "unknown" as it was, commenced its career of "world-conquests."

#### THE POOR AND THE TRADITIONLESS AS CREATORS

New epochs of spirituality have very often been started by "races" or "classes" which from the platform of the dominant races or classes, i.e., the *élites* of the age, were declared in so many words to be "inferior," *pariah*, semi-civilized, "dysgenic," "unfit," incompetent or *Sûdra*. It is in such beginnings of new epochs in world-culture among the alleged "inferior" races or classes of the day that we find objectively and historically disproved the chauvinistic contention of Lapouge in his paper on *La Race chez les populations mélangées* presented at the Second International Congress of Eugenics (New York 1921). In his judgment *les blancs* (the whites) and *les riches* (the rich) were pronounced to be identical with *les éléments intellectuellement supérieurs* (the intellectually superior elements) and their work with *la civilisation elle-même* (civilization itself).

It is time for the students of spirituality, religion and social service to get emancipated from the unthinking proneness to establishing such equations between eacogenic (or dysgenic) factors and the "untried" (or "unhistorical") races on the one hand and the poorer and "lower" classes on the other. The scare propagated by Lapouge, Leonard Darwin and other eugenicists to the effect that the age of the rise of the "races" that are known to be "inferior" and of the poorer "classes" is tantamount to the epoch of *la barbarie des contemporains du mammoth* (the barbarism of the contemporaries of the mammoth) or that "the nation as a whole is slowly and steadily deteriorating as regards its average inborn qualities" ought to have no place in positive or speculative science. For, neither the poor nor the

<sup>4</sup> E. Spranger: "Das Wesen der deutschen Universität" (*Das akademische Deutschland*, Berlin 1930) and "Wilhelm von Humboldt" (*Research and Progress*, Berlin, July 1935).

young (the traditionless, the "unknown") can be postulated to be dysgenic *en masse*. Eugenic "fitnesses" or good, i.e., desirable stocks and strains are "widely distributed" among the diverse races and classes. The possibilities of progress in creativeness and spirituality may then be taken to be assured for mankind.

Our Krishna proclaimed in the *Gītā*: "Forsake all other duties, seek refuge in me alone." Christ preached: "I am the way, the life, the truth." Mohammed taught the Arabs: "Verily, all believers are brethren." The religion or spirituality contained in these *dicta* is powerful with mankind still. But in the modern world there are groups, classes, races, and nations even among Hindus, Christians, and Moslems to whom such "monism" or faith in certain individuals or particular tenets is not necessary to awaken the spiritual sense or foster ethical life. Duty, truth, brotherhood and equality have been making conquests among the most heterogeneous races and classes such as happen to be indifferent to Krishna, Christ or Mohammed. The area of the moral and religious world today is much more extensive than formerly, embracing as it does untold millions among the poor and the traditionless who have been exhibiting the results of their creative and spiritual *shakti*.

#### LIFE'S BATTLE NOT FINALLY WON

There should not be any difficulty to maintain with Herder<sup>7</sup> his thesis in *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* to the effect that the stream of civilization indicates the progress and development of mankind, an eternal striving, a series of continuous

strivings. It is to be understood in terms of *Gang Gottes über die Nationen*, i.e., the march of God through all nations. "In spite of all apparent disorders the world is heading towards progress, and man will not rest until he has made the Earth his own. At the present moment, however, all the up-to-date achievements of the human spirit are nothing but the means to the more profound establishment and wider expansion of the humanity and culture of our generation."

The alarm-signals of Dean Inge (*Idea of Progress*) and others are not to be ignored, however. We must not be blind to the great social reality that class-prejudice and race-prejudice continue still to be fundamental to almost every religious and ethical system. Political domination,—the government of one people by another,—is not yet a thing of the past. The advance of democracy has failed to check the overtures of despotism. *Mātsya-nyāya* (the logic of the fish) obtains today as yesterday in international affairs. The world cannot afford to forget as yet the bitter complaint of Dante against political disunion and corruption which found expression in the following lines of his *Divine Comedy*:

"Ah, slavish Italy! thou inn of grief!  
Vessel without a pilot in loud storm!  
Lady no longer of fair provinces,  
But brothel-house impure! \* \* \* \*  
While now thy living ones  
In thee abide not without war; and  
one  
Malicious gnaws another; aye, of  
those  
Whom the same wall and the same  
moat contains.  
Seek, wretched one! around thy sea-  
coasts wide,

<sup>7</sup> R. R. Ergang: *Herder and the Foundations of German Nationalism* (New York 1987).

Then homeward to thy bosom turn,  
and mark  
If any part of thee sweet peace  
enjoy."

Dante's censure would be valid even today and for a much larger number of men and women than in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. And those who are looking forward to a veritable international peace and national solidarity would be justified in complaining that the "Greyhound," *Veltro*, Deliverer or *Yugâvatâra*, eagerly awaited by Dante in order that the "beast" might be "destroyed with sharp pain" is yet to come.

Finally, poverty's rôle in human life and societal evolution is as powerful as ever. Unemployment and "under-employment" on nationwide scale have grown into the normal feature of world-economy. The masses of dark clouds cannot all be dissipated because of the silver linings, few and far between, in the standard of living.

The progress in creativeness and spirituality is real and often statistically measurable. But the other side of the shield,—the limits of this progress for every race, region and epoch,—must by no means be overlooked. Life's battle has not been finally won. It continues to be serious. The solution of the problem is far off. It is the privilege of man always to have a struggle ahead.

#### THE ETERNAL PRAYER AND COSMIC STRUGGLE

As long as the "earthly paradise" cannot be taken to have been established it behoves us all, optimists especially, to be modest. With the authors of the *Bṛihadâraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (I, iii, 28) the student of modern spirituality can then still offer the following prayer :

"*Asato mā sadgamaya  
Tamaso mā jyotirgamaya  
Mrityormā mṛitam gamaya.*"  
(Lead me from unreality to reality,  
Lead me from darkness to light,

Lead me from death to immortality.)  
Here, indeed, we have the eternal prayer for every race and every region. This is the only correct prayerful attitude for struggling, creative, half-victorious, half-vanquished, spiritual man.

For, spirituality, like everything else that is human, is relative and admits of degrees. At every epoch, nay, at every moment of our life-history we need more reality, more light, more immortality. It is not in the destiny of man ever to be able to say : "The last word of human welfare, spirituality, creativeness and progress has been said, and I can afford to sit tight on my achievements."

No. Following Confucius, the great teacher of China's millions, we should rather attempt always to "be a new man each day, from day to day be a new man, every day be a new man" (*The Great Learning*).<sup>\*</sup> Let us recall the maxim, *nānāsrāntāya sṛiṣṭi* of the *Āitareya Brāhmaṇa* (VII, 15).

Equally dynamic and interested in the immediate present is the Buddhist *Majjhima Nikāya*. And today as ever in the past it should be worth while for us to act up to the following truth pronounced by Śākya the Buddha in regard to the life's attitudes of *Bhaddhakaratta* (Devoted to the good) :

<sup>\*</sup> In Ku Hung ming's translation the book is called *Higher Education* (Shanghai 1913) ; cf. B. K. Sarkar : *Chinese Religion Through Hindu Eyes* (Shanghai 1916), p. xii. The religions of China and India have been entirely misinterpreted by Max Weber in *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie* (Tuebingen 1922-26), Vols. I and II.



"*Atītam nānvāgameyya  
nappatikamkhe anāgatam  
yaḍ atītam pahinantam  
appattancha unāgatam.  
Ajjeva kiccham ātappam  
Ko janna maranam suve?  
Na hi no samgaran tena  
Mahāsenena machchunā.*"

(Don't pursue the past,  
Long not for the future,  
The past is dead,  
Not yet realized is the future,  
Exertions are then to be made today;  
Who knows death may come  
tomorrow?  
Not possible any pact with Death  
and his army)

It is when equipped with the hard-headed realism and objective methodology of Confucian and Buddhist energists that the optimist of today can look back to the past and acquire the moral right to proclaim with Walt Whitman his bold inductive generalization regarding the trend of man's spiritual evolution to the effect that

"Roaming in thought over the universe  
I saw the little that is Good steadily  
hastening towards immortality,  
And the vast all that is called Evil  
I saw hastening to merge itself and  
become lost and dead."

To the consummation of this noble world-view be harnessed the constructive futurism of all men and women,—of the present Convention of Religions at Rangoon as of the International Congresses on religion, science, philosophy, arts, technology, rationalization, politics, business etc. that mark the spiritual life of the modern world in the East and the West.

Industrial civilization has justified itself not only by developing the tech-

nique and the material power but by promoting the ethical and social sense as well. The "life beyond" and idealism have been served no less magnificently than the life in the now and the here. Objective records about the past do not reveal to us more glorious evidences of mankind's factual spirituality in ancient or medieval times. In other words, spirituality has maintained itself in both its wings, positive and mystical, and has been widened; nay, because of the perpetual conflicts it has been intensified and deepened through the ages. We may then accept the following spiritual *credo* of another poet\* while commencing our next chapter in the cosmic struggle for more physical health and vigour, more material happiness, more democracy and social equality, more freedom, and more all-round creativeness or spirituality:

"And as I watch the struggling souls  
Creating hopes and fears that the  
world heeds not,  
How am I startled to discover  
That each one of the race bears the  
divine spark  
That urges to Paracelsus's and  
Sordello's tasks,  
That every man and woman revolts  
with Promethean rage  
Against repression, injustice and im-  
poverishment of the heart!  
Then as deeper into life's process  
I search,  
In agreeable surprise I am happy to  
find  
That nothing but the stream of  
infinite fire  
Could have pushed mankind on so  
far,  
And I conclude  
That all of us have been leading  
another life beyond!"

\* Ida Stielor: *Edelweiss and Alprose* (New York 1920).

## ATMABODHA

BY SWAMI SIDDHATMANANDA

वपुस्तुषादिभिः कोशैर्युक्तं युक्त्यवघाततः ।

आत्मानमान्तरं शुद्धं विविच्यात्तन्दुलं यथा ॥ १६ ॥

यथा As तुषादिभिः कोशैर्युक्तम् covered with husk etc. तन्दुलं rice ( अवघाततः by means of threshing विविच्यते is separated तथा so ) वपुस्तुषादिभिः कोशैर्युक्तं covered with the (five) sheaths शुद्धं pure आन्तरं innermost आत्मानं the Ātman युक्ति अवघाततः विविच्यात् should be discriminated by repeated reasoning.

16. By repeated reasoning the pure, innermost Ātman should be discriminated from the five sheaths in which it is, as it were, encased, even as rice is separated from its husk by means of threshing.

*Discriminated etc.*—Comp. *Vivekachudāmanī*, Verses 151-153 and *Kātha Upanishad* 2-2-17.

सदा सर्वगतोऽप्यात्मा न सर्वत्रावभासते ।

बुद्धावेवावभासेत स्वच्छेषु प्रतिबिम्बवत् ॥ १७ ॥

आत्मा The Ātman सदा eternally सर्वगतः all-pervading अपि although सर्वत्र everywhere न not अवभासते is manifested बुद्धौ in the intellect एव only अवभासेत is manifested स्वच्छेषु प्रतिबिम्बवत् even as an object is reflected only in bright surfaces.

17. The Ātman is not manifested everywhere although it is eternally all-pervading. It shines only in the intellect, even as an object is reflected only in bright surfaces.

देहेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिप्रकृतिभ्यो विलक्षणम् ।

तद्वृत्तिसाक्षिणं विद्यादात्मानं राजवत्सदा ॥ १८ ॥

आत्मानं The Ātman देहेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिप्रकृतिभ्यः विलक्षणम् ( as ) different from the body, senses, mind, the intellect, and Prakriti तद्वृत्तिसाक्षिणं ( as ) the witness of their functions सदा always विद्यात् should be known राजवत् like a King.

18. The Ātman should always be known as different from the body, senses, mind, intellect and Prakriti and as the witness of their functions, even as the King is different from his ministers and is a witness of their actions.

व्यापृतेष्विन्द्रियेष्व्वात्मा व्यापारीवाविवेकिना ।

दृश्यतेऽङ्गेषु धावत्सु धावन्निव यथा शशी ॥ १९ ॥

यथा As अङ्गेषु धावत्सु when the clouds move शशी moon धावन्निव दृश्यते appears as moving ( तथा so ) इन्द्रियेषु व्यापृतेषु the senses being engaged in ( their objects ) आविवेकिना by the ignorant आत्मा the Ātman व्यापारी actor इव as ( दृश्यते is seen ).

19. As the Moon appears to be moving when the clouds pass over it, so by the ignorant the Ātman is seen as the agent of actions when the sense-organs only are engaged (in their objects).

आत्मचैतन्यमाश्रित्य देहेन्द्रियमनोधियः ।

स्वक्रियार्थेषु वर्तन्ते सूर्यालोकं यथा जनाः ॥ २० ॥

यथा जनाः सूर्यालोकम् ( आश्रित्य स्वक्रियार्थेषु वर्तन्ते ) As people perform their work with the help of sunlight ( तथा so ) देहेन्द्रियमनोधियः the body, sense-organs, the mind and the intellect आत्मचैतन्यमाश्रित्य being illumined by the consciousness of the Self स्वक्रियार्थेषु वर्तन्ते perform their respective functions.

20. As people perform their work with the help of sunlight, so the body, sense-organs, the mind and the intellect perform their respective functions, being illumined by the consciousness of the Self.

देहेन्द्रियगुणान् कर्माण्यमले सच्चिदात्मनि ।

अध्यास्यतेऽविवेकेन गगने नीलतादिवत् ॥ २१ ॥

गगने नीलतादिवत् As blueness etc. ( are attributed ) to the sky असत्त्वं pure सच्चिदात्मनि in the Ātman which is existence and knowledge देहेन्द्रियगुणान् कर्माणि the characteristics and activities of the body and the sense-organs अविवेकेन through ignorance अध्यास्यते are superimposed.

21. As blueness etc. are attributed to the sky so the characteristics and actions of the body and the sense-organs are, through ignorance, superimposed on the Ātman which is existence and intelligence.

अज्ञानान्मानसोपाधेः कर्तृत्वादीनि चात्मनि ।

कल्प्यन्तेऽभ्युगते चन्द्रे चलनादि यथाग्भसः ॥ २२ ॥

यथा As अभ्युगते चन्द्रे in the moon reflected in water अभसः चलनादि the motion etc. of the water ( कल्प्यन्ते are falsely imagined ) ( तथा so ) अज्ञानान् through ignorance मानसोपाधेः of the limiting adjunct, the mind कर्तृत्वादीनि the attributes of doer etc. च expletive आत्मनि in the Ātman ( कल्प्यन्ते imagined ).

22. As the motion etc. of the water are imagined in the moon which is reflected in it, so, due to ignorance, the qualities like agency, etc. of the limiting adjunct, the mind, are imagined in the Ātman.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

In *The Education that India Needs Today* we appeal to the educators of our country for the necessity of promoting moral and religious training in schools and colleges without going into doctrinal controversies and religious bigotry. . . . Prof. Dr. Stanislaw Schayer is a renowned Orientalist and professor

of Sanskrit in the University of Warsaw. In *The Historical Background of Indian Tolerance* he points out how the spirit of tolerance in India differs from the Western tolerance which is rather a negation than a sublimation of religious feelings. Dr. Mahendranath Sircar shows how *The Sacrifice of God* is necessary to save mankind and how

Christ gives us the model for the emergence of humanity into the Kingdom of God. . . . Dr. Debendra Chandra Dasgupta in his *Locke's Ideas of Vocational Education* shows how Locke's educational theory sets forth the welfare of the state as the main objective of vocational education. . . . *The Expansion of Spirituality as a Fact of Industrial Civilization* formed the presidential speech delivered by Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar at the Religious Conference organized in Rangoon, in connection with Sri Ramakrishna birth centenary.

### THE CRY FOR A COMMON CREED

The cry for a common religion has not died down. The existence of communal feeling and its unseemly exhibitions have recently fluttered the dove-cotes of some religious peace-makers in India. Distressed at the sight of the bitter feuds among the several communities some have felt and expressed that a common religion over and above the particular religions prevalent would have substituted peace and friendship among the men of diverse faiths in place of strife and hatred. And what is more, it would have brought India much nearer to her national goal by this time. Accordingly men were found to plead for it in earnest. The idea is an old one. Attempts have been made in the past towards founding a common universal church. They did not bring all men under the banner of a particular faith. They could only add some more new sects to the already numerous ones. Mere oldness or repeated failures in the past do not detract from the worth of a basically sound idea. But the idea of a uniform creed is too utopian to come true. It expresses good intentions but bad knowledge as it ignores some hard realities of human life.

To Hinduism which has always had the broadest outlook on religion, the notion of a common clear-cut faith for all is repellent. It takes a synthetic view recognizing the varying needs of men and the necessity for a variety of paths broad-based upon a few fundamental and universal truths. Its conception of the chosen Ideal (Ishta Devatâ) goes even further and allows each man to have his own religion. That is what ought to be. In this sense Hinduism, deprived of its social content, does not consider any religion even Judaism, Islam, Christianity, Taoism or Zoroastrianism outside its pale. The idea of a common basis is already there as an accomplished fact. Again the prescription of a standardized faith as a cure for communal ills reveals a faulty diagnosis of the malady. If for centuries past India could live in comparative peace with its numberless sects, why is it not possible today? Compared to all the religious persecution and holy blood-bath abroad India was almost a heaven on earth. It was certainly a haven for the persecuted in religion. But does a common religion do away with conflicts? Most of the statesmen and politicians of the West do not seem to bother themselves much about religion. But what religious fanatic has been able to outdo some of them in inhuman persecution. The cry for a common religion is like the cry for a totalitarian state.

Pugnacity is ingrained in human nature. Men fight not so much for religion as in spite of it. The jingo in man has been made to combat in the past as well as in the present for sordid objects in the name of religion. Historians who are straightening out the tangled skein of the causes and conditions of holy wars and expeditions in

the past are discovering how vulgar economic and political motives masqueraded under the form of faith. Persons who see through pretences realize that most of the present tension among the communities has been worked up by base motives. The fight between the Sanatanists and the Untouchables is at bottom a social struggle,—a fight between *corks* and *corks*. It only embalms the fighter's conscience to call it religious. Real religion welcomes necessary differences though it condemns all privileges. Yet religion has everywhere been employed to bolster them up. Cheap eclecticism cannot bring heaven on earth. If we are to take a lesson from the past we should rather turn to Asoka who taught his subjects to practise charity and benevolence towards all, to see goodness everywhere, to banish jealousy and ill-will and who stressed the essence of religion. If man must needs fight by nature, let him fight his own pettiness and imperfections.

### WHAT IS PREJUDICE?

Is prejudice an instinct, a conditioning, or a purpose? Mr. Clarence R. Skinner briefly examines the question in an issue of *Unity*. On a broad examination of the subject of prejudice, he says, the hypothesis of its instinctive character melts away. Not only are instincts a great many in number, but they are neither consistent in time nor universal through space. An adult of twenty-five quits his pet aversions which he had as a boy of ten, and a man of seventy-five rarely sticks to his biases at forty. Again attitudes vary from Orient to Occident, from North to South. Prejudices are complex in nature. In a few instances there might be some primal urge interwoven with certain forms of our impulses. But it is oversimplification

of matters to refer them to it alone. Is it then the result of a conditioning in our childhood, as psychologists are wont to affirm? There is hardly any doubt that a good deal of our peculiar notions and attitudes are influenced by the social mind of the environment into which we are born and where our early career is cast. Such conditioning is going on at the present day in a number of countries in the world. Though a good deal of our prejudices can thus be shown a product of the conditioning, it will be taking a superficial view to explain them all in that way. On the contrary the majority of them seem to be purposive, that is to say, are consciously employed to rouse up the mass mind with a view to securing a definite end. For example the feeling against the 'niggers' in the U.S.A. and the Jew-baiting in modern Germany are largely weapons in a competitive struggle. Political parties and candidates work up popular fury against their opponents by referring to matters extraneous to the point at issue but likely to prejudice the voters' opinions. It is often said that ignorance breeds prejudices. But it is not so. An ignorant mind may be utilized by a person. But ignorance itself does not create a prejudice. It rather seems that the more harmful prejudices in our nature are purposive.

There is a good deal of truth in the above. But perhaps we can take a step further. Purpose would no doubt account for a large number of our aversions. But purpose need not always be conscious. Many of them are rooted in our unconscious, where they are closely related to our instincts. We have an instinctive fear for the unknown, an instinctive abhorrence for all differences which seem to disturb our growth or even peril our existence. They naturally set our instinctive

defence-mechanism working, which liberates the hostile and fighting forces. Conscious purpose shrewdly wakes up these fears to serve its ends. Even conditioning which may at first appear to be an independent source of biases is itself a manifestation of the prejudice that lurks in the sub-conscious of the social mind. Such prejudices issue out of the narrow view of the self with which an average man is born into this world. As only education can drive away superstition, so only moral and religious instruction on the real nature of our being and becoming can rid us of those unintelligent prejudices which are fostered by a cramping selfishness and which harden the hearts of the more favoured against their less favoured brethren.

#### SAD STUFF

The doughty Rajput Knight has for the present fought shy of the storms of a rather unkind politics and entered into the comparatively safer arena of intellectual tournament to fight Hindu religion and culture *à outrance*. For the past few months the doctor has been pouring down vitriolic denunciations upon Hindu culture in a number of Indian periodicals. We appreciate his bitterness against the many ills which beset Hindu Society of today and his impatience at the slowness with which it is casting away its outworn garments. The writings reveal a yearning for a better state of things. And when that is said it is all that can be praised. For all through his disjointed writings he betrays an appalling ignorance of history in general and of Hinduism in particular. Else he could distinguish between appearances and realities and would have paused before branding the talk about Hindu spirituality as a mere empty phrase. He finds the Indians on the same spiritual

level with the Gold Coast barbarians. According to him Hinduism is stagnant and immobile. Its outlook has always been other-worldly and it has always lacked positivistic tendencies. In short the very name of Hinduism is anathema to him. He stands for a Simon Pure materialism—which by the way is being denounced everywhere by the best minds of the world. Religion has no rational basis for him. He imagines that all religious truths have been torpedoed beyond repair by the new knowledge. In an article contributed to the March number of *Twentieth Century* he has discovered that a new renaissance has dawned upon post-War Europe. He draws a rosy picture of it at the end and sings a siren's voice in calling the young India to the enjoyment of its benefits. But before we reproduce the picture for our readers and examine its correspondence to reality we want to cite a few of the exquisite bits with which he has been regaling his readers for sometime past. In one of his articles he has made a lot of discoveries. In the birth of Christianity, in the Great Chinese Wall and the Hindenburg line he has discerned parallels of Gandhi's passive-resistance. One wonders why he omitted the walled cities of the ancient and medieval times. The really similar phenomenon of the Plebian resistance in the early days of the Roman republic, however, wholly escapes him. Christ, according to him, was a political leader who hid himself under a spiritual garb and sought to liberate his people from the Roman thralldom. Though simple and unsophisticated fishermen were at first deluded as to the real nature of Christ's mission 1900 years ago, they later understood better. But it is a pity to find one so deluded in the twentieth century. As a matter of fact the man who gave the first form to historic

Christianity exhorted all Christians to eschew politics studiously. Again Christ being a political leader founded a religion "which destroyed autocracy wherever it found it". As examples he could have referred to Czarist Russia and Christian Abyssinia—not to mention the fact that it was employed as a tool of autocracy everywhere. We still hear that the Renaissance began from 1453 and also that it was partly a crusade against autocracy in state and the divine right of the rulers which was then the current political theory. Well, what about post-Reformation and post-Renaissant Tudor, Bourbon and Medici despotisms? And as for the divine right theory it became most pronounced in England during the Stuart period and in France during the reign of the later Louis', particularly Louis XIV—both long after Renaissance. Sometimes it appears that the Aryan settlers "followed the safer course of peaceful penetration". At others we are not sure if "the Dasyus were driven out of their homes without a struggle". Often we alight upon such remarkable findings as that "the Vedas came to be composed near Ambala" about 1500 B.C. and again as that "Brahmanism celebrated its own triumph by the performance of the horse-sacrifice (Ashwamedha)" after the death of Harsha and after a long period of unbroken Buddhist supremacy. Presumably there were no horse-sacrifices in the long interval. Furthermore one learns that "Buddhism . . . was originally started as a mere mode of life". And in March, 1936 "Nadir Shah is still hastening slowly in" the direction of reform in Afghanistan. Similar quotations might be piled up. But we refrain. They show as the learned doctor has remarked elsewhere "to what little advantage history both ancient and modern, is learnt in the

schools . . . " These not only neatly impale the doctor on his own satirical pen but also give a foretaste of the profoundness of the generalizations which follow.

In the present article on "The Renaissance of India" after a twelve-page rambling in the wilderness of some stale and trite facts of history he suddenly crops up on page 18 to administer a few lines of homilies to young India how to keep afloat the sinking national ship by jettisoning religion and ends shortly after by pointing out the blessings brought on post-War Europe by what he calls the neo-renaissance started by the Great War. He declares eloquently " . . . how the Great War acted as the new Messiah of a new order of human freedom, and how this order outlawed all religion as a social evil, and how it created a new mentality cleared of old beliefs which had no vestige of truth and reason to justify them, and how it had the talismanic effect upon the body politic which shook itself free, became strong and able to pull its own weight, and how in fact modern nations have emerged out of darkness of antiquity . . . " and so on. One wonders through what spectacles the writer sees facts. Can anybody but one with a perverted vision acclaim with delight the sight of the post-War Europe? Is he ignorant of the dark realities which threaten all the best which human civilization has laboriously built up through the untold centuries of history? Hinduism has a place for materialism, but it never worships it above all. The so-called progress can never shake her faith in the greatness of her ideal. Men whom fortune has placed in high positions owe a greater responsibility to society than the commoner citizens. They should think twice before they let escape such sad stuff which is easily gulped

down by the unwary readers and the ever-watchful enemies of truth, freedom, and reason.

### HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

In his last Convocation address Mr. Shyama Prasad Mukherji has tried with the help of facts and figures to break up the myth that the Indian students are having an overdose of higher university education. He has also shown the hollowness of the complaint which tries to rest all the blame for the unemployment of the educated upon a short-sighted policy of quick and disproportionate expansion of university education. The whittling down of the not very wide opportunities for higher education appeals to some as a rough and ready method for curing unemployment. But how does it really improve matters to swell the ranks of the uneducated unemployed in lessening the numbers of the educated unemployed. It bespeaks neither the goodness of heart nor the keenness of intellect to drive the malady from one part of the body politic to another which is less articulate. Obviously the remedy lies elsewhere. In many cases the recourse to University education is only a means to ward off as far as possible the evil spectre of unemployment. Again had their been

avenues of employment, other than clerical jobs, in sight the rush for higher education would have fallen off by itself. Without referring to the many well-known suggestions for relieving the distress we should like to refer to one fruitful idea which has so far attracted little attention. Though the prejudice against manual labour has largely diminished it still lingers among most of our polished graduates who feed upon an unhealthy romantic literature and dream roscate dreams of the future in their college days. When they leave the portals of the university behind they are usually loath to begin humbly in life by accepting bottom posts in business concerns etc. A study training in manual labour along with the cultivation of a more real and healthy outlook on life will do away with the aversion. Such training can be provided with little extra cost. The compulsory labour programme for the students in modern Germany is an example to profit by. It is by such provisions of character-building that the present system of education, which is uninspired by any great ideal can in some measure be linked up with the best traditions of the past to which the Vice-Chancellor has referred in another portion of his speech.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**EMINENT AMERICANS WHOM INDIA SHOULD KNOW.** By Jabez T. Sunderland. Published by R. Chatterjee, Calcutta. 283 pp. Price Rs. 3.

The Reverend Mr. Sunderland, a retired Unitarian minister in America, has become well known in India for his interest in Indian freedom and culture. In this volume he writes of America but still has his eye on the situation east of Suez. The selection of people described in this little book makes

no claim to include all the eminent Americans or even the most eminent. If long sub-titles were in vogue, the book might well be called: *Eminent Americans*, chosen because they were political or social reformers, liberal in religion, and in most cases, Unitarians.

Of course, Abraham Lincoln must be included in such a group for he stands out as one of America's greatest leaders in the cause of freedom. Then comes Ralph Waldo Emerson, the great essayist who remarked at



the time of the suppression of the Indian Mutiny that the English seemed to read only the Old Testament, never glancing at the New. Emerson is one of the most quotable of authors, as this short biography shows. With Emerson he has ranked James Russell Lowell, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and John Greenleaf Whittier as great authors deserving attention not only for their writings, but also for their liberal political views and their leaning toward Unitarianism.

The political writers who are chosen as eminent are Thomas Paine, William Lloyd Garrison, and Horace Greeley. Paine was the English pamphleteer who kept up the spirits of the American people during their war for independence. Garrison was undoubtedly a fanatic, but his fanaticism whipped up the sentiments of the American people until slavery was abolished. Horace Greeley could scarcely be called as great as the other two, although he did wield a considerable influence as a New York editor in the time of Rev. Sunderland's youth.

Among women he has chosen to write about Mrs. Lucy Stone and her daughter Alice Stone Blackwell, and Julia Ward Howe. Mrs. Stone was a well-known worker for women's rights; her daughter has given her life to social causes in America, has done much to aid Russian refugees, persecuted Armenians, and has written many articles in behalf of Indian self-government. One of the most glowing sections of the book is the story of the life of Julia Ward Howe, a truly religious woman who gave her life to social reforms in America.

The two clergymen represented are William Ellery Channing, the founder of Unitarianism; and Charles F. Dole a Unitarian minister who is little known in America but greatly admired by the author.

The final biography is of Charles W. Eliot, a former president of Harvard University and an ardent Unitarian.

The people chosen as eminent are representative more of the author's point of view than of America, for most of them are from New England and were eminent Unitarians. The author wanted to talk to India about social reforms, political freedom, and Unitarianism and uses the biographies to do it. The biographies are really little sermons in simple style vitalized by the author's sincere admiration, telling of the inspiring lives of eminent Americans whom, in the

opinion of Rev. Sunderland, India could emulate with profit.

**THE CHALLENGE OF THE ETERNAL RELIGION.** By E. De Meulder, S. J. Light of the East Series No. 16. Published by "Light of the East" Office, 30, Park Street, Calcutta. 410 pp. Price Re. 1-4.

The eternal religion is Roman Catholicism, and the challenge is given by Father De Meulder of the Society of Jesus. The author describes the book as an attempt to find "the formula that will express our oneness."

There are six attitudes toward the world: Materialism, Scepticism, Absolute Exclusivism, Subjectivism, Relativism, and Catholicism. After dismissing all but the last, the author gives an able exposition of the chief beliefs of the Church of Rome. A religion should be judged by its goal and the means of attaining that goal; we are asked to judge Catholicism by its ideal, not its history, and to see that it is unique in essence, not in degree. The question is: "What is the religion where I will be able to give God the greatest possible glory?" In comparing religions, "Catholics do not admit that one religion is as good as another, but do admit that most religions are good." Then by the use of the Aristotelian logic in which the Jesuits are so skilled, he shows that religion is the whole of man, Christianity is the whole of religion, and Catholicism is the whole of Christianity. Q. E. D. All of which leaves a puzzled reader with the feeling that he has combined Catholicism with Absolute Exclusivism.

In defence of the scholastic philosophy, the author claims that Plato and Aristotle have built a philosophy "the main rational framework of which will always remain the only possible receptacle of a supernatural religion." In its relation to Indian philosophy he says that "Catholicism is the only logical outcome of Hindu thought" for there is no important doctrine of Vedânta not found in the philosophy of Saint Thomas Aquinas. The different systems of Vedânta will be united in the organic whole of Thomism.

In the above, the author has not only involved himself in self-contradiction but has also shown his innocence of Vedânta and its great exponents. If Plato and Aristotle have built up the only receptacle of a supernatural religion, then the Vedânta can have no place in it in its entirety, nor in Thomism. Again, if the Vedânta systems are mutually con-

tradictory, no Aristotelian logic can unite them in a higher synthesis. From outside, Vedānta is a hotch-potch. But a deep student always knows that great philosophers and saints like Madhavāchārya, Vijnān Bhikshu, and Madhusudan Sarasvati have found harmony in them. Catholicism has never accommodated the highest flights of the Advaita Vedānta, and Catholic saints like Saint Teresa of Avila have recoiled from giving expression to the extreme views of truth which their intuitions have revealed for fear of antagonizing the dogma. And well might a Vedāntist retort with far greater force that every faith is contained in Vedānta without, however, acknowledging the suzerainty of a particular set of dogmas.

On the social side the author points out the advantages of an international religion, the catholic desire for the emancipation of women, and the interest of their Church in educational and social reforms—all of which is no speciality of the Catholic faith.

The Jesuit Fathers have won a deserved acclaim for their scholarship, and Father De Meulder is no exception. Especially careful was his treatment of the historicity of Jesus and of the myths of Buddhist or Egyptian training in Jesus' youth. Sometimes the logic of the argument seems to require unstated dogmatic premises which remind one of the small boy's syllogism:

Some dogs have tails.

My dog has a tail.

Therefore my dog is Some Dog.

It is a logic which convinces after belief, rather than before.

Apologists for a religion usually wish to keep the discussion on the basis of their ideals and then often compare their own ideals to the practices of others. This was especially notable in the author's treatment of non-Catholic Christian sects and in spite of his evident care also crept into some of his remarks about India. The book was written primarily to set forth the Roman Catholic policy in India, it has been declared orthodox by the Bishop, and therefore those who wish to understand Catholicism will find it a dependable as well as an able exposition by a devoutly religious man.

**THE HISTORY OF THE BRAHMO SAMAJ (1830-1878 A.D.).** By G. S. Leonard. *Reprinted and republished by Kshitindra Nath Tagore. Pp. 343. Price Rs. 2-4 only.*

This little work relates the history of the Brāhmo movement from its inception to

1878, the date of the well-known Cooch Behar marriage which occasioned a further split in the already divided young Church. Written by an Englishman Mr. G. S. Leonard who was for sometime the Assistant Secretary of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, it has the apparent merit of narrating facts from a neutral standpoint. It was first published in 1879. Being neither very critical nor scholarly and in no sense exhaustive it has so far attracted little attention. In view of the fact, however, that most of the extant books on the subject having been written by men who themselves took part in the disputes and controversies of the movement differ in their account the publisher has reprinted the book with the object of presenting before the public an account of the movement from the pen of a sympathetic and impartial observer.

The author groups the events of the movement round the three personalities of the Raja, the Maharshi and Keshab Chandra Sen in three separate chapters. The last chapter is devoted to an exposition of the Brāhmo faith and its possible future repercussions on the Hindu Society. After a few introductory remarks the author gives a short account of the ancestry, education and career of Rammohun and briefly traces the influences which finally led him to found a new church on the basis of the teachings of the Upanishads. The second chapter recounts the activities of the new church when it was mainly under the guidance of Devendra Nath Tagore. The third brings us into controversial matters. The account is short and is not as much detailed as one would expect. The author has tried to be fair to all. But one cannot get away from the feeling after he has come to the end that perhaps he has not always been able to take an altogether judicial view. Contemporaneous observation, if it lends vividness to impressions, too often fails to afford a true perspective. While there is no mistaking his admiration for Brāhmoism, he betrays a want of depth and insight in his observations on Hinduism. Perhaps that is readily understandable in an alien who wrote about 60 years ago when Hinduism stood badly in need of a true interpretation. He has neither been an acute critic in seeing in Brāhmoism "the highest developed form of Hinduism" nor a true prophet in predicting "mighty changes in the social fabric and religious opinion of the Hindus through Brahmoism".

**CONCENTRATION AND MEDITATION.**

*Compiled and published by the Buddhist Lodge, London, 37, South Eaton Place, Westminster, S.W.1., pp. 343.*

The growing appreciation of Yoga and the gradual spread of its ideas show that the art of mind development is attracting more and more attention especially among the people of the West. The present compilation by the Buddhist Lodge in London is humbly called a manual of mind development though more properly it might have been designated a Buddhist manual for self-realization. It aims to interpret the principles of concentration and meditation, the latter being explained in terms of the famous Delphic motto "know thyself", and lays down hints and directions for their practice. It is manifestly written mainly from the standpoint of Buddhism which lays so much stress on the need of mental culture, although it is not true to say as it has been said in the introduction that no great philosophy or religion has emphasized the necessity for mind development as much as Buddhism has done. The Yoga system of Patanjali is not only one of the first to formulate a course of mental discipline but also is concerned solely with it.

Concentration is explained as "the preliminary exercises in one-pointedness of thought" and as "the narrowing of the field of attention in a manner and for a time determined by the will" (pp. 19, 34). The necessity and the utility of concentration along with the proper time and places for practising it occupy a few pages. Several directions and exercises for concentration as well as their results are set out in some detail. The exercises include such subjects for holding the mind upon as colour, physical objects, counting of breathing etc. Meditation which is treated next is differentiated from concentration by the fact that it "produces a state of consciousness in which the spiritual point of view is alone of importance". Meditation is stated to be of two kinds, higher and lower. The difference is sought to be conveyed by means of an analogy which is not very clear. The purpose, result, character, difficulties, methods and objects of the different kinds of meditation are given. Some observations on the necessity for character-building and on the means to achieve it as well as some remarks on the laws of health are sandwiched between the chapters on lower and higher meditations, though it is not easy

to understand why they have been placed where they are. A certain amount of effort at character-building is a necessary preliminary towards all mental development though the weeding out of all selfish motives may not be necessary to achieve some success in the beginning. The indispensableness of character-building to self-realization is emphasized. Here again as in many other places character-building is envisaged under some Buddhist mottoes. Under higher meditation come the Buddhist Jhâna, Zen, and a dissertation on perfect, motiveless act to be pursued by men who aim at the higher flights of meditation. Contemplation comes last. It is explained as the union with Reality. Some hints on group-meditation are given in one appendix, the other lists a number of subjects for meditation. The presentation is rational, and though Buddhist terms abound it aims to be non-sectarian and tries to satisfy all tastes. The first part will be of practical help to many, while the value of the latter portion is mainly descriptive. We would, however, like to point out one popular misconception about Yoga, which has cropped up in the book more than once. Yoga does not mean 'union' but only effort as has been pointed out by competent scholars, native as well as Western.

**SANSKRIT**

**THE MAHABHARATA—CONDENSED IN THE POETS' OWN WORDS.** By Pandit A. M. Srinivasachariar. Translated by Dr. V. Raghavan, M.A., Ph.D. Published by G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras, pp. 495. Price Re. 1-4.

This is an abridged edition of the great Indian saga Mahâbhârata condensed in the words of the poet himself and a companion volume to the Râmâyana recently brought out by Messrs. Natesan & Co. The main thread of the story is preserved, enriched here and there by the incorporation of portions from some of the notable passages and discourses. A simple and faithful English translation accompanies the text which is given in Nagri. Remembering the arduous nature of the task of shortening a work which runs into over 90,000 verses it can be said that the work has been ably done. It will be useful to those readers who have little time and less inclination to go through the bulky original.

## BENGALI

**SRI RAMKRISHNER SMRITI KATHA.**  
*Collected and published by Swami Nirlepa-*  
*nanda, 1, Mukherji Lane, Baghbazar,*  
*Calcutta, pp. 30. Price As. 5.*

This booklet contains a few reminiscences of Ramakrishna Paramahansa related to the

compiler by Lakshmi Devi and Jogindra Mohini Biswas, both better known as Lakshi Didi and Juginma respectively to the devotees of Ramakrishna. Written in a pleasantly conversational style they throw new and interesting side-lights on the life of Ramakrishna. We are sure, the admirers of Ramakrishna will welcome it with delight.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

## THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

## PROGRESS OF WORK IN 1935

The 27th Annual General Meeting of the Ramkrishna Mission was held on Good Friday evening at the premises of the Belur Math, the Headquarters of the Mission, with Srimat Swami Suddhananda in the chair. A large number of monastic and lay members were present. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and passed. The report for 1935 was then read by the Secretary. The following extracts from it clearly indicate the progress of the work in all the departments in the various centres of the Mission.

## CENTRES

The total number of centres including those in N. and S. America, England, and Europe, Burma, Ceylon and Strait Settlements, was 102 at the end of 1935. The number of centres of the Mission in India, exclusive of the Ramakrishna Math and its branches, was 42. A new educational centre in the Coimbatore District was added in the

## ACTIVITIES

The Mission conducted both Temporary and Permanent Work. Temporary Relief Work was done in times of distress caused by floods, famine, fire, tornado or epidemics during the year in Bankura, Hooghly and Burdwan Districts, as well as in Abdalpur, Dhalla, Manbhum and Tamluk. The total expenditure for the works was more than Rs. 16,000, the most important of them being the Damodar Flood Relief.

The Permanent Work was of three kinds as usual, viz., Philanthropic, Educational and Missionary. Each of the centres conducted one or more of these.

## PHILANTHROPIC

The Philanthropic Activities include three types of work, viz., (1) Indoor Hospital Work, (2) Outdoor Dispensary Work and (3) Regular and Occasional Service of various kinds. Thirty-two out of the centres in India conducted one or more of these types of work.

In all there are 7 Indoor Hospitals including the Child Welfare Centre with its attached Maternity Hospital at Bhowanipore, Calcutta, which does both pre-natal and post-natal work along with its other activities and also trains midwives. There are 31 Outdoor Dispensaries including a Tuberculosis Dispensary at Delhi. The centres doing philanthropic work are flung in different parts of India, and many of them are situated in Benares, Hardwar, Brindaban, Allahabad and other places of pilgrimage, as well as in cosmopolitan cities such as Rangoon, Bombay, Cawnpore and Lucknow. The Sevashram at Benares is the largest philanthropic institution of the Mission, and the Hospital at Rangoon holds the highest record in outdoor and indoor work. The latter treated nearly 2 lakhs of patients in 1935.

Philanthropic work is done also by such rural centres of the Mission as Bhubaneswar in Orissa, Jayarambati in Bankura, Sargachi in Murshidabad and Sonargaon in Dacca.

The Indoor Hospitals of the Mission treated more than 6,800 cases in 1935 as against 6,500 in 1934, and the Outdoor Dispensaries treated over 9,00,000 in 1935 as against nearly 8,30,000 in 1934. The number of new cases and the number of repeated ones were in the proportion of 10 : 17.

## EDUCATIONAL

The Educational Work of the Mission falls mainly into two divisions, viz., (1) Boys' Schools, Girls' Schools, Mixed Schools, the classes ranging from the Matriculation

standard down to the Primary, and (2) Students' Homes and Orphanages.

Mass education for adults and juveniles through day and night schools forms a feature.

Out of the 42 centres in India 29 conducted some type of educational work or other. In all there were 15 Students' Homes, 3 Orphanages, 8 Residential High Schools, 4 High Schools, 2 M. E. Schools, 33 Primary Schools, 7 Night Schools and 3 Industrial Schools.

Some of these institutions are situated in or near the University centre of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay, and in the towns of Jamshedpur, Deoghar and Barisal. Physical, cultural, moral and religious training was imparted to the inmates or pupils.

Rural Educational Work was done as usual by some of the centres such as Sarisha near Diamond Harbour, Contai in Midnapore, Habiganj and Sylhet in Assam. The Centre at Sarisha has nearly 500 boys and girls in its schools, and spends over Rs. 12,000 every year.

The Industrial Schools taught one or more of the arts, crafts and industries which may be grouped under the following heads: (1) Mechanical and Automobile Engineering, (2) Spinning, weaving, dyeing, calico-printing and tailoring, (3) Cane-work, and (4) Shoe-making. In the Industrial School at Madras, the Mechanical and Automobile Engineering Course covers a period of 5 years, and a certificate issued by the Mission is recognized by the Government. The centre at Habiganj conducts two Shoe Factories to provide better training-ground for the cobbler boys of the locality, and runs two Co-operative Credit Societies for the benefit of the cobblers.

The Students' Homes at Madras and Calcutta, the Vidyapith at Deoghar, the Sister Nivedita School at Calcutta and the centre at Sarisha are a few of the most prominent educational institutions of the Mission. The educational centre at Madras is the largest. It had 925 pupils in 1935. It spends over Rs. 40,000 annually for its work.

In the 70 educational institutions of the Mission in India there were over 3,900 students in 1935 as against 3,030 in 1934.

In Ceylon there are 12 schools conducted by the Mission, with over 2,200 boys and girls, and in Singapore 2 schools with over 200 students.

In all there were over 6,800 students in all

the centres, and of these more than 4,800 were boys and 1,500 girls.

#### EXPENDITURE

The disbursements of the Mission in India may be roughly computed to be over 2 lakhs for philanthropic works, and over 3 lakhs for educational activities, the total approximate expenditure being over 5½ lakhs for its Permanent Work.

#### LIBRARIES AND READING ROOMS

There were 60 Libraries and as many Reading Rooms, each centre having one or more. The Mission Society at Rangoon did excellent work and had a daily average attendance of nearly 100 in its Reading Room. The Students' Home at Madras had more than 17,000 volumes in its Library.

#### MISSIONARY

The monastic members of the Mission went on propaganda tours in India and abroad. The teachings of the Vedanta as interpreted by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were disseminated chiefly through the English monthlies—*Prabuddha Bharata* (Myavati), *Vedanta Kesari* (Madras) and *The Message of the East* (Boston) and the *Udbodhan* in Bengali and the *Ramakrishna Vijayam* in Tamil, as well as through the publications of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Literature and similar works. Classes were held and lectures and sometimes radio-talks were given at or near the various centres, associations, Universities and other bodies. A member of the Order formed the nucleus of a Vedanta centre in Switzerland, and another started a centre in London, during the year under review.

There are colonies for the Harijans and other backward classes in some centres those at Trichur (Cochin State) and Shella in Khassia Hills being two of the important ones. At these colonies the monks of the Mission have been conducting for over a dozen years past educational and other work for the uplift of these neglected communities.

#### THE IDEAL OF SERVICE

The Meeting came to a close with an exhortation of the Chairman to the audience to continue to practise the ideal of service to humanity, irrespective of caste, creed or colour. Further progress of the work will depend upon more persons practis-

ing the glorious ideal for which the Mission stands and more money. Swami Vivekananda who founded the Mission in 1897 sounded the clarion call for Tyaga and Seva (self-dedication and service), and it is to be hoped that the young men of India will respond to it in ever-increasing measure.

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA CENTENARY THESIS AND ESSAY COMPETITION

The public are hereby informed that, under the auspices of the Centenary Committee, thesis and essay competitions will be held all over India, Burma and Ceylon in connection with the birth-centenary of Sri Ramakrishna, on the lines indicated below. We earnestly hope that all, irrespective of caste, creed or nationality, will take part in these healthy literary competitions and thereby pay their tribute of love to the sacred memory of Sri Ramakrishna whose life stands before the world as a wonderful synthesis of all creeds and faiths:--

### I. THESIS COMPETITION

It is open to men and women of India, Burma, and Ceylon. The competitors should possess the minimum academic qualification corresponding to M.A., M.Sc., etc., of Indian Universities. The thesis should be written in English on "The philosophy of Sri Ramakrishna and its bearing on world-culture" and be complete in about 20,000 (twenty thousand) words.

First prize: Rs. 200/- (Rupees two hundred) only in cash.

Second prize: Rs. 150/- (Rupees one hundred and fifty) only in cash.

### II. ESSAY COMPETITION

(a) Among College students: It is open to college students (both boys and girls) of all grades, belonging to educational institutions of India, Burma, and Ceylon (Government, Private or otherwise). The Essay should be written in English on "Sri Ramakrishna's contribution to the social and religious life of India" and should not exceed 4,000 (four thousand) words.

For boy-students:—

First prize: Rs. 30/- (Rupees thirty) only.

Second prize: Rs. 25/- (Rupees twenty-five) only.

For girl-students:—

First prize: Rs. 30/- (Rupees thirty) only.

Second prize: Rs. 25/- (Rupees twenty-five) only.

Each prize shall comprise a copy of "The Cultural Heritage of India" (the Ramakrishna Centenary Volume in two parts of about 2,000 pages of double crown octavo), one medallion and cash.

(b) Among school students: It is open to all boys and girls of matriculation or corresponding classes in educational institutions of India, Burma, and Ceylon (Government, private or otherwise). The essay should be written in their own mother tongues on "Sri Ramakrishna and his teachings" in about 2,000 (two thousand) words. The competitors of this group are invited to write their essays in any of the following languages:--

(1) Assamese, (2) Bengali, (3) Oriya, (4) Hindi, (5) Punjabi, (6) Sindhi, (7) Gujrati, (8) Marathi, (9) Tamil, (10) Telegu, (11) Malayalam, (12) Kanarese, (13) Burmese, (14) Sinhalese, (15) Urdu.

There will be 60 prizes in all for school boys and girls. In each language-group two prizes will be awarded to the best two essayists among the boys and two to the best two among the girls.

For boys:—

First prize: Rs. 15/- (Rupees fifteen) only.

Second prize: Rs. 10/- (Rupees ten) only.

For girls:—

First prize: Rs. 15/- (Rupees fifteen) only.

Second prize: Rs. 10/- (Rupees ten) only.

Each prize shall consist of valuable books and a medallion.

N.B.—The thesis should be submitted in type or in legible handwriting to the undersigned on or before the 31st August, 1936. The Essays should be written neatly and clearly on only one side of the paper and not on both sides, and should reach the undersigned on or before the 31st July, 1936. The Essay competitors should produce a certificate from the Heads of the institutions to which they belong, to the effect that they are *bonafide* students of their respective schools and colleges. The results of these competitions will be announced in November, 1936, and the prizes will be

awarded at a general meeting to be held in February, 1937, when the centenary celebrations will be brought to a close.

The names and addresses of the competitors should be clearly written.

Sd. SWAMI SAMBUDDHANANDA,  
Asst. Secretary,

Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Committee,  
Albert Hall,  
15, College Square, Calcutta.

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

WASHINGTON, D. C.

The Vedanta Society of Washington, D. C. celebrated the centenary of the birth of Sri Ramakrishna in its own humble way and it was a great success.

There were special services at the Society's Chapel for three consecutive days, beginning 8th March last. Visiting Swamis lectured on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. Besides there were illustrated talks on the art and culture of India. The lectures were very well attended and everyone listened with great interest.

The local newspapers co-operated in giving good publicity to the celebration. The *Washington Post*, a prominent daily, published two articles on the centenary of the birth of Sri Ramakrishna and his life and teachings. The first article which was published on Sunday, March 1st, was contributed by Mr. Pierre de Remer, a friend of the Society. The second article which appeared in the magazine section of the Sunday number of March 8th was written by the Church Editor of the paper. It was illustrated by a picture of Sri Ramakrishna and covered half a page, giving a short narrative of the Master's life and his mission. The *Daily News* also gave a write up and published the programme of the celebration.

The programme started with a Radio Talk given by Swami Vividishananda over the station W. O. L. on Saturday evening, March 7th, his subject being, "The Centenary of the Birth of Sri Ramakrishna—The Great Mystic of Modern India."

### AFRICA

Indians staying in different states of Africa and also foreign friends and admirers celebrated the inauguration of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary in a fitting manner.

Indian owned newspapers, both weekly

and daily, in Kenya, Tanganyika, Zanzibar and Mombassa splashed the President's message of peace and good-will and also Swami Vivekananda's appreciation of Sri Ramakrishna, with bold double and treble column headlines.

In Mombassa, even the European owned newspapers devoted two to three columns to the report of local celebrations and the happenings in Calcutta and Belur Math.

Papers in Dar-es-Salaam also have published the above messages.

The *Kenya Mail* of Mombassa which is a bi-lingual daily paper of the Indian community residing there has reported both local and Indian celebrations in its front page with a streamer line.

Mr. P. D. Master whose enthusiasm for the cause of the Centenary can hardly be equalled by any with the help of some local friends, is trying to establish an institution on the line of the Ramakrishna Mission, at Mombassa during the centenary year with a view to propagating the teachings of the Master.

Mr. C. V. Patel who is a member of the Central Celebrations Committee organized a beautiful celebration at Johannesburg.

Indian community residing in Natal and Rhodesia also celebrated the Centenary.

### BENARES

The Conference of Religions which was held at Benares from 1st March to 5th March last in pursuance of the general scheme of celebration of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary was a great success. All religions and sects were represented at it and all of its five sittings were largely attended by men of light and leading from the various parts of the country. Prominent among those who took an active part in the conference and thereby contributed to its success were Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Pramatha Nath Tarkabhusan, Principal A. B. Dhruva, S. J. Shiva Prasad Gupta, and the heads of the six prominent monastic orders of India who are generally known by the name of Mandaliswaras, namely, Swami Swarupananda, Swami Bhagavatnanda Giri, Swami Jayendra Puriji, Swami Nrishingha Giri, Swami Krishnanda Giri and Swami Mahadevananda Giri.

Principal Dhruva presided over the first day's sitting. In his presidential address he observed: "Sri Ramakrishna's life was mainly a life of realization while that of

Vivekananda was a life of interpretation. Of the two glorious institutions on both sides of the Bhāgirathi, Dakshineswar is the place of spiritual realization of Sri Ramakrishna and Belur Math is the place of interpretation of the great Swami Vivekananda. The harmonious combination of realization and interpretation in life alone can make all happy and prosperous."

Mandaliswar Swami Jayendra Puriji presided at the second day's sitting while Mandaliswar Swami Narasingha Giri was elected chairman on the third day. The fourth day's proceedings were conducted under the chairmanship of Mandaliswar Swami Bhagavatananda Giriji, while on the fifth day Mandaliswar Swami Krishnanda Giriji was at the helm of the conference.

Mandaliswar Swami Jayendra Puriji said that God was the only Guru. It was God who manifested Himself as Guru in Sri Ramakrishna. Since the days of Sri Sankarāchāryya, India was not blessed with a better Guru than Sri Ramakrishna.

Mandaliswar Swami Narasingha Giri in his presidential address dwelt mainly on the conclusions of the Advaita philosophy and proved conclusively that Sri Ramakrishna realized those truths in his life.

Mandaliswar Swami Bhagavatananda Giriji, Kāvya-Sāṅkhya-Yoga-Nyāya-Vedānta Tirtha, Vedānta-Vāgish, Mīmāṃsā-Bhusan, Vedaratna said that Sri Ramakrishna who was the living embodiment of the principles of the *Vedas*, had a far wider scope for doing good to the people of the world representing as he did in his own person Sri Rama of Tretā and Sri Krishna of Dwāpara Yuga. Service to suffering humanity without any distinction is no doubt one of the best means to realizing the truth of the Vedic saying—*Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*. He did not understand how people can worship God in the unconscious, unless they can worship Him in the conscious. Sri Ramakrishna's teachings contained the essence of politics, economics, sociology, and above all Sanatan Dharma and whatever else was necessary for human happiness and prosperity.

Mandaliswar Krishnananda Giriji observed that there could be no doubt that Rama and Krishna incarnated together in the person of Ramakrishna. He was a true Paramahansa (a great swan) and like a 'Hansa' he separated truth from untruth and then gave human shape to this discrimination in the person of Vivekananda.

In the latter Ānanda (bliss) naturally followed from his Viveka (discrimination).

Among the speakers who deserve special mention were Mr. M. A. Khair, representing Islam; Rev. D. Sasanashri, representing Buddhism; Rev. N. K. Mukherji, representing Christianity; Hariram Singhji of the Nirmala Akhara, representing Sikhism; S. Mahendra Kumarji, representing Jainism; Srimat Tapaswiji, representing the Dadu sect; Rao Bahadur Baijanath Pande, representing Theosophical Society; representing Hinduism, Pandit Pramatha Nath Tarkabhusan; Pandit Malaviya; Dr. S. Maitra, representing Brahmoism; Prof. J. S. Jajnik and Swami Sarvananda, Swami Sambuddhananda, Swami Satyananda and Brahmachari Chinmay Chaitanya of Ramakrishna Order besides the chairman of the different days.

#### NEW DELHI

A convention of Religions in connection with the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary was held at New Delhi from 20th to 22nd March last. The venue of the convention was the Ramkrishna Mission Ashrama at Ibbetson Road and Panchkuin Road crossing. The spacious pandal erected for the purpose was fully packed, every day, with a cosmopolitan gathering who gave a patient hearing to the advocates of different religions that were represented at the convention.

Dr. Bhagawan Das who presided at the first day's sitting thanked the promoters of this convention for giving an opportunity for the fraternization of various faiths. He observed that religion bound together all human hearts to God. By exhaustive quotations from the *Vedas*, the *Quran* and the *Bible*, he analysed many common factors in them and said that the ways of Knowledge, Devotion and Work were the three essential features of all existing faiths. Other speakers of the day included Rev. H. Jenkins, Wesleyan Chaplain of New Delhi, representing Christianity; Babu Jai Bhagwan Jain, B.A., LL.B., Advocate, representing Jainism; Sardar Mangal Singh, M.L.A., representing Sikhism and Pandit Vishnu Mitra representing Arya Samaj.

The second day's session was held under the presidency of Mr. M. S. Aney who in his closing remarks observed that Swami Vivekananda expounded in his silver voice the Hindu conception of religion to the Western world at the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago. Concluding he appealed to the missionaries of all faiths to explain to



the public the rational side of their rituals as a clear understanding of the ritualistic ideals would make people liberal enough to respect each other's religious feelings. Others who spoke on that day were Dr. Jal Dastur Cursetji Pavry, M.A., Ph.D., the distinguished Parsee orientalist and author, speaking on Zoroastrianism; Swami Karunananda speaking on Jainism; Dr. Radha Kumud Mukherjee of the Lucknow University speaking on the life and teachings of the Lord Buddha, Swami Sharvananda, President of the Local Ramkrishna Mission Ashram speaking on Hinduism and Mr. S. Satyamurti speaking on the harmony of all religions.

On the third day Sir David Devadoss, ex-Judge, Madras High Court, presided at the session. In his presidential address Sir David observed that the cardinal principle that Sri Ramakrishna tried to inculcate was the glory of service. God could not be won by any system of ritual but through love and service. He hoped that the activities of the Ramkrishna Mission might expand so that it might continue to render useful social service irrespective of caste and creed.

The Honourable Raja Ghaznafar Khan who spoke on Islam, congratulated the Centenary Committee on its affording an opportunity to religious speakers of all thoughts to represent their respective faiths from one platform. Prominent among others who spoke were the Hon'ble Pandit Prakash Narain Sapru, Swami Sharvananda, and Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra, M.L.A.

#### NAGPUR

A convention of Religions was held at Nagpur in connection with the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary from 1st to 3rd March last. His Holiness Jagadguru Sri Sankarāchāryya of Karvir Peeth (Dr. Kurtakoti, M.A., Ph.D.) presided over the session. Prof. G. R. Malkani, M.A., of Indian Institute of Philosophy, Amalner, spoke on Hinduism, while Buddhism was represented by Prof. N. K. Bhagwat, M.A., Fellow, Bombay University. Others who spoke at the convention were Prof. Hiralal Jain, M.A., LL.B., Amraoti, representing Jainism; Prof. Teja Singh, M.A., Khalsa College, Amritsar and Prof. Dilip Singh Viridi, M.A., City College, Nagpur, representing Sikhism; Mr. L. A. Hydri, Muslim Missionary, Madrasat-ul-waizin, Lucknow, representing Islam; Rev. T. W. Gardiner, M.A., O.B.E., Nagpur, representing Christianity;

Mr. F. J. Ginwala, Solicitor, Bombay, representing Zoroastrianism; Mr. W. L. Chiplanker, pleader, Akola, representing Theosophy and Mr. Kumudbandhu Sen, Puri, representing Vaishnavism of Sri Chaitanya. Swami Bhaskareswarananda, President of the local Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama also gave an address on Sri Ramakrishna and Universal Religion.

#### LONDON

A distinguished gathering met at 51 Lancaster Gate on the 25th of February last at the headquarters of the Sri Ramakrishna Vivekananda Vedānta Society in London. Mr. Henry S. L. Polak presided over the first Centenary functions of Sri Ramakrishna held in London. The proceedings opened with the playing of one of Beethoven's sonatas on the piano by a disciple of Swamiji, Miss Joyce Villiers, A. R. C. M., an accomplished artist. Mr. Polak, in a few chosen words, explained the ideals on which Sri Ramakrishna took his stand and which were in the main, the harmony of all religious creeds in the world. Dr. Miss Mary Clark, who had been on a visit to India, spoke about the teaching of Sri Ramakrishna laying stress on its universal character reconciling the spiritual as well as the rational needs of humanity. She was followed by Swami Avyaktananda, the Minister-in-Charge, who explained in some detail the point of harmony in Sri Ramakrishna's life in the light of the teachings of the ancient prophets.

#### NEW YORK

As part of the world-wide observance of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Sri Ramakrishna, the prophet of the harmony of religions, a celebration was held in the New York Town Hall on the 8th of March last under the auspices of the Ramakrishna Vivekananda center.

Among the speakers were Dr. Frederick Robinson, President of the College of the City of New York, Rev. Samuel Goldenson, Rabbi of the Temple of Emanuel, Rev. Wendel Phillips, Rector of Trinity Church, New Rochelle, Dr. Ananda Coomarswamy, Curator of the Boston Museum, Indian Section, Dhan Gopal Mukherjee, Hindu Lecturer and Author, and Swami Nikhilananda, leader of the Ramkrishna Vivekananda center.

# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

## SWAMI VIVEKANANDA IN OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

(From the 'Oakland Enquirer')

Tuesday, March 13, 1900

### IN WORK AND LOVE

*Says the Swami, Lies the Way of  
Salvation*

*Final Address by the Exponent of the  
Religious Philosophy of the Hindoo*

Wendte Hall of the First Unitarian Church was crowded last evening with a large audience to hear the “Way of Salvation” from the standpoint of the Hindoo priest, Swami Vivekananda. This was the last lecture of a series of three which the Swami has delivered.

He said in part: “One man says God is in heaven, another that God is in nature and everywhere present. But when the great crisis comes we find the goal is the same. We all work on different plans, but the end is not different.

“The two great watchwords of every great religion are Renunciation and Self-

sacrifice. We all want the truth and we know that it must come, whether we want it or not. In a way we are all striving for that good, and what prevents our reaching it? It is ourselves. Your ancestors used to call it the devil, but it is our own false self.

“We live in slavery and we would die if we were out of it. We are like the man who lived in total darkness for ninety years and when taken out into the warm sunshine of nature, prayed to be taken back to his dungeon. You would not leave this old life to go into a newer and greater freedom which opens out.

“The great difficulty is to go to the heart of things. These little degraded delusions of Jack So-and-So’s, who thinks he has an infinite soul, how small he is with his different religions. In one country, all as a matter of religion, a man has many wives, in another one woman has many husbands;

so some men have two gods, some one God and some no God at all.

"But salvation is in work and love. You learn something thoroughly; in time you may not be able to call that thing to memory. Yet it has sunk into your inner consciousness and is a part of you. So as you work, whether it be good or bad, you shape your future course of life. If you do good work with the idea of work, work for work's sake; you will go to Heaven or your idea and dream of Heaven.

"The history of the world is not of its great men, of its demi-gods, but it is like the little islands of the sea, which build themselves to great continents from fragments of the sea drift. Then the history of the world is in the little acts of sacrifice performed in every household. Man accepts religion because he does not wish to stand on his own judgement. He takes it as the best way of getting out of a bad place.

"The salvation of man lies in the great love with which he loves his God. Your wife says, 'Oh, John, I could not live without you'; some men when they lose their money have to be sent to the asylum. Do you feel that way about your God? When you can give up money, friends, fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, all that is in the world and only pray to God that He grant you something of His love then you have found salvation."

March 14, 1900

#### MORE LECTURES BY THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

The great popularity of the course of lectures just finished by the Swami Vivekananda has been a matter of surprise to those who have been familiar with the almost empty houses that have greeted some of the lecturers that have appeared here.

At the earnest solicitations of those who have had the pleasure of listening to him, he has consented to give another course of three lectures. They will take place at Wendte Hall, Fourteenth and Castro Streets, on successive Monday evenings, beginning with March 19. The subjects are: The Manners and Customs of India; The Arts and Sciences in India; and the Ideals of Quakers.

As no more tickets will be sold than enough to comfortably fill the hall, persons desiring to hear these lectures will do well to apply to the sexton at the church during the mornings of this week.

March 21, 1900

#### INDIA'S PEOPLE

*The Swami Vivekananda tells  
of His Countrymen*

The lecture which the Swami Vivekananda gave Monday night in his new course on "The People of India", was interesting, not only for what he had to relate of the people of that country, but for the insight into their mental attitude and prejudices which the speaker gave without really meaning it. It is apparent that the Swami, educated and intellectual man that he is, is no admirer of Western civilization. He has evidently been a good deal embittered by the talk about child widows, the oppression of women and other barbarisms alleged against the people of India, and is somewhat inclined to resort to the *tu quoque* in reply.

In commencing his talk he gave his hearers an idea of the racial characteristics of the people. He said that the bond of unity in India, as in other countries of Asia, is not language or race, but religion. In Europe the race makes the nation, but in Asia people

of diverse origin and different tongues become one nation if they have the same religion. The people of Northern India are divided into four great classes, while in Southern India the languages are so entirely different from those of Northern India that there is no kinship whatever. The people of Northern India belong to the great Aryan race, to which all of the people of Europe, except the Basques in the Pyrenes, and the Finns, are supposed to belong. The Southern India people belong to the same race as the ancient Egyptians and the Semites. To illustrate the difficulties of learning one another's languages in India, the Swami said that when he had occasion to go into Southern India he always talked with the native people in English, unless they belonged to the select few who could speak Sanskrit.

A good deal of the lecture was taken up in a discussion of the caste system which the Swami characterized by saying that it had its bad side, but that its benefits outweighed its disadvantages. In brief, this caste system had grown up by the practice of the son always following the business of the father. In course of time the community came thus to be divided into a series of classes, each held rigidly within its own boundaries. But while this divided the people, it also united them, because all the members of a caste were bound to help their fellows in case of need, and as no man could rise out of his caste the Hindoos have no such

struggles for social or personal supremacy as embitter the people of other countries.

The worst feature of the caste is that it suppresses competition, and the checking of competition has really been the cause of the political downfall of India and its conquest by foreign races.

Respecting the much-discussed subject of marriage in India, the Swami said that his people did not believe in matches being made by a couple of young people who might be attached to one another, without regard to the welfare of the community, which is more important than that of any two persons. "Because I love Jennie and Jennie loves me," said the Swami, "is no reason why we should be married."

He denied that the condition of the child widows is as bad as has been represented, saying that in India the position of widows in general is one of a great deal of influence, because a large part of the property in the country is held by widows. In fact, so enviable is the position of a widow that a woman or a man either might almost pray to be made a widow.

The child widows, or women who have been betrothed to children who died before marriage, might be pitied if marriage were the only real object in life, but, according to the Hindoo way of thinking, marriage is rather a duty than a privilege, and the denial of the right of child widows to marry is no particular hardship.

# WOMEN'S EDUCATION IN INDIA

BY THE EDITOR

## I

Recent investigations go to show that the low standard of the physique and the bad health of the Indian women are deplorable; the rate of literacy among them is only 3%; in Behar there are only five literate women in every thousand of the people; even in Madras Presidency which has the highest average of literacy there is only one educated girl for every six educated boys. The efforts for the progress of women's education in India have been quite unsatisfactory. Mrs. Margaret Cousins observed in the middle of 1935 in a bulletin in the *Indian Press* published by the International Committee for India that the present position of Indian women "represents a condition of improvement as compared with thirty years ago, though held to be below the average of the time of the Buddhist and Vedic eras when women seem to have had entire equality with men and were held in the highest honour".

The Women's Associations, namely, the Poona and Bombay Sevâ Sadans, the Saroj Nalini Dutt Nâri Mangal Samiti of Bengal, the Women's Indian Association, the Mahilâ Sevâ Samâj of Bangalore, the Arya Samâj of the Punjab etc. are carrying on adult education among women in various parts of India. The All-India Women's Conference has started the Lady Irwin College in Delhi, the first Home Science College in India. The aim of the College is said to be the orientation of girls' education to the needs of their home life. The Indian Women's Uni-

versity of Poona, the Sister Nivedita Girls' School of the Ramkrishna Mission, Sri Sri Sârâdcswari Âshrama and Bâlikâ Vidyâlaya of Calcutta, and several other institutions have been trying, in their own way, to give Indian women an education which would be truly national in type, practical and industrial to a certain extent according to necessity, and productive of character and strength, by combining the modern Western methods with what are purely Indian. All these attempts are too meagre to cope with the existing conditions and to meet the requirements for the great work of uplifting Indian womanhood. The well-wishers and organizers of women's institutions in India are seriously handicapped for want of sufficient funds for the purpose.

The need for a proper women's education and its spread throughout the length and breadth of India can hardly be over-estimated. None can gainsay the fact that the work of nation-building in India has enormously suffered because of the want of proper care in improving the condition of Indian women by a healthy and vigorous education. The chronicles of all nations acknowledge their debt to mothers of great men and women. Bonaparte asked Mme. de Staël in what way he could best promote the happiness of France. Her reply was: "Instruct the mothers of the French people." The precept of Mme de Staël can be followed to the greatest advantage by the Indians with a view to promoting the happiness of India. It is said that a little boy, after reading Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, asked his mother

which of the characters she liked best. She replied, "Christian, of course; he is the hero of the story." The child said, "Mother, I like Christiana best, because when Christian set out on his pilgrimage he went alone, but when Christiana started, she took the children with her." The lesson of this popular story is too true and it has been too much neglected in the work of nation-building in India.

## II

Women's education in the Vedic period was much advanced, and the upper classes gave maidens a very liberal education equally with the boys, which could win for them a dignified position in society. The women of that age held a high place in their husbands' houses which they ruled like queens. In the *Rigveda* we find: "Though she loved fine dress, it alone could not satisfy her. She was noble, independent-spirited, and fearless. She was not only a mother of heroes, but she was also herself heroic." Vispalâ, the queen of King Khela had lost her leg in a war and had it replaced by an iron one. Indrasenâ, wife of the sage, Mudgala, helped her husband in fighting their enemies. She became a charioteer, entered into the enemies' camp, and defeated them. Among the *Rigvedic* composers 26 were women. There were women who used to perform sacrifices, offer hymns to the Gods, and excelled in music and other fine arts.

The immortal names of Gârgi, Maitreyi, Ghosâ, Lopamudrâ, Mamatâ, Apâlâ, Suryâ, Indrâni, Sachi, Sârpârâjni, Visvavârâ and others remind one of the remarkable wisdom and spiritual height to which Indian women in those times attained. The rare intellectual and spiritual attainments of the Buddhist nuns were sufficient to prove that women's education in the Buddhist

period was no less advanced. The *Theri Gâthâ* was composed by 73 Buddhist abbesses. It is only in the neo-Brahmanical revival after the Buddhist era that we find that women as a class became degraded in education and culture and that they ceased to make any remarkable progress.

## III

Some of the modern movements in India have set themselves to the task of achieving for Indian women the identical emancipation that the Western women of today have achieved. There are men and women in modern India, who feel the stirrings of a new life in the radical feminist movements that are going on all over the world. They are in favour of importing downright occidentalism in the work of regenerating the women of modern India. Some time ago, an Indian lady while writing on the women of modern Russia and appreciating them very much observed at the very outset: "Woman throughout the ages has allowed herself to be kept in subjection by man and used more or less as a chattel for his convenience and pleasure. Personal liberty of thought and action has lain dormant in her and thus she has been reduced to mere brute existence. It is not until this century that woman, by placing more confidence in her own intelligence has gradually begun to throw off the shackles which have hitherto bound her and has begun to use this intelligence for her own advancement and advantage. Everyone desires freedom for self-expression. Woman wants and needs recreation just as a man does. Yet, this very freedom—the birthright of every individual—is denied her. Under the capitalistic and other social orders, she is regarded as a domestic drudge and it is considered that child-bearing and rearing and family house-

keeping should be the aim and end of her existence. In the labour market, her position is no better. Bernard Shaw says, 'Under the capitalist system women found themselves worse off than men because as capitalism made a slave of the man, and then by paying the woman through him, made her his slave, she became the slave of the slave, which, is the worse sort of slavery.' What has Soviet Russia been endeavouring to accomplish for her women-folk today? So far she is the only European State that is making an honest effort to obtain the complete emancipation of woman." Those who hold such views strongly advocate for women's complete freedom of action and demand for their social, political, legal, and economic equality with men. They refer to the rapid progress of women in those matters in the advanced countries of the world. Now, what is the Western ideal of woman's emancipation and how far that ideal has been realized by the women of today? Richard Chinnathamby observes in an article on the feminist movement in India, published in the last March issue of the *Twentieth Century*: "What is the emancipation that the Western woman has achieved after such long and sustained struggle? She inherits and holds property of her own. She divorces her husband at the least sign of aggressiveness on his part. She has children if and when she likes. She appears on turf, track, court and field. She takes an active part in the Legislature of the country. She is a spoke in the wheel of constitution. She enters into every walk of life, and does man's work with equal efficiency. She acquits herself better in, and even monopolises, some departments as nursing and telephone. She votes and smokes; goes out with men friends to talkies, or for rides in the car, or grows giddy with jazz. This

is the freedom that the Western woman has achieved! This emancipation which is a social lie! The finer instincts of women and the endowing virtues of the fireside have been plucked by the roots and thrown into the street. She finds no need for them in the new order of society where everything has been reduced to a formula or mechanised. To be frank, she has moved away from emancipation in the real sense." It would be utterly unjust to say that Western women have everything bad and rotten in their endeavours for and achievements in the movement of emancipation. There have been some really great women both in Europe and America, who have uplifted womankind by dint of their talents and character, and some Western women have done honour to their sex in some of their activities for the emancipation of women all over the world. Now, the question is whether the revolutionary changes of radical feminist movements of the day are really necessary for the uplift of womankind in India, whether the ideals set up by Western womanhood would suit the environment, racial heredity, and cultural tradition of Indian womanhood. Many people in India anticipate that the radical feminist movement will be an impediment in the path of an Indian Woman's development along the lines of the glorious culture she has inherited from the hoary past. It will bring in chaos and disorder in her home and in the society to which she belongs. It will lay axe at the very root of the Indian ideal of womanhood. The virtues of the hearth will be destroyed by it and the integrity of the family unit will be lost for ever. The movement is not at all sound and sober, it will not import Western virtues, but will destroy at the same time what are best in the tradi-

tional ways of living in the history of Indian womanhood.

Sister Nivedita who thought and did much for the right education of Indian women wrote long ago : "Indian hesitation, however, about a new type of feminine education, has always been due to a misgiving as to its actual aims, and in this the people have surely been wise. Have the Hindu women of the past been a source of shame to us, that we should hasten to discard their old-time grace and sweetness, their gentleness and piety, their tolerance and childlike depth of love and pity, in favour of the first crude product of Western information and social aggressiveness? On this point India speaks with no uncertain voice. 'Granted', she says in effect, 'that a more arduous range of mental equipment is now required by women, it is nevertheless better to fail in the acquisition of this, than to fail in the more essential demand, made by the old type of training, on character. An education of the brain that uprooted humility and took away tenderness, would be no true education at all. These virtues may find different forms of expression in mediæval and modern civilisations, but they are necessary in both. All education worth having must first devote itself to the developing and consolidating of character, and only secondarily concern itself with intellectual accomplishment.' "

#### IV.

Any movement for the uplift of Indian womanhood will certainly fail, if it does not begin with, and end in, promoting the national ideals of Indian womanhood as embodied in the history and literature of ancient India. Indian women can boast of Umâ as the grand ideal of maidenhood, of Sitâ, Sâvitri, Sati and others as the perfect ideals

of wifehood, of Gândhârî and others as the matchless ideals of motherhood, of Meerâbai etc. as the glowing ideals of saintliness and love of God, and of Padmini, Chândbibî, Jhânsî Râni, Ahalyâbâi etc. as so many ideals of strength, heroism, and resourcefulness. These ideals should be the perpetual lights for the guidance of Indian womanhood. Suited to the conditions of the modern age, Indian women must undoubtedly be made efficient as housewives and citizens too. They must have knowledge of modern arts and sciences, at the same time they must fulfil their duties in life as daughters, sisters, wives, and mothers. The moral and spiritual ideal of womanhood must under all circumstances be raised high as it was done in ancient India. It is said in the *Rigveda* X. 109.3 that the chastity of a woman was protected like the throne of a mighty king. The *Râmâyana* and the *Mahâbhârata* are replete with stories of noble and virtuous women. Vâlmiki describes in immortal lines the sentiments of a faithful wife, matchless in their expression in the history of the world's literature :

"If the righteous son of Raghu wends  
to forests dark and drear,  
Sita steps before her husband wild  
and thorny paths to clear!  
Like the taster refuse water cast thy  
timid thoughts aside,  
Take me to the pathless jungle, bid  
me by my lord abide,  
Car and steed and gilded palace, vain  
are these to woman's life,  
Dearer is her husband's shadow to the  
loved and loving wife."

Then again, when the faithfulness of a chaste lady is questioned, Sitâ's words must inspire women of India for all time to come :

"If unstained in thought and action  
I have lived from day of birth,



Spare a daughter's shame and  
anguish and receive her, Mother  
Earth!

If in duty and devotion I have  
laboured undefiled,

Mother Earth! who bore this woman,  
once again receive thy child!

If in truth unto my husband I have  
proved a faithful wife,

Mother Earth! relieve thy Sita from  
the burden of this life!"

## V

After much deliberation, Swami Vivekananda asked his countrymen not to modernize the Indian women but to allow them to develop in the footprints of Sitâ. Studying the present needs of the age he wished also that the Indian women should be taught arts and sciences which would be of benefit not only to themselves but to the country

as well, at the same time they should keep up the glorious traditions of their history and culture. He said, "To the women of this country I would say exactly what I say to the men. Believe in India and our Indian faith. Be strong and hopeful and unashamed, and remember that with something to take, Hindus have immeasurably more to give than any other people of the world."

Considering the fact that the greatness of the Hindu mother is writ large in the history of Indian culture, the exponents of women's education and the advocates of feminist movement in India should first of all remove the causes of physical decline and appalling ignorance among Indian women, and then lead them along the national lines of education with the efficiency needed for the exigencies of the twentieth century.

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

BY DR. ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY

"They call Him by a multitude of names, Who is but One"; "A single Fire that burns on many altars"; "Even as He sheweth, so is He named"; these are affirmations taken from the sacrificial hymns of the *Rigveda*. "As He is approached, so He becomes"; "It is because of His great abundance,—or because He can be so variously participated in,—that they call Him by so many names." By way of comment, we cite St. Thomas Aquinas, "The many aspects of these names are not empty and vain, for there corresponds to all of them one single reality represented by them in a manifold and imperfect manner" (*Summa*, 1, 13, 4 and 2). Nothing, perhaps, so strangely impresses or bewilders a Christian student

of Saint Ramakrishna's life as the fact that this Hindu of the Hindus, without in any way repudiating his Hinduism, but for the moment forgetting it, about 1866 completely surrendered himself to the Islamic way, repeated the name of Allah, wore the costume, and ate the food of a Mussulman. This self-surrender to what we should call in India the waters of another current of the single river of truth resulted only in a direct experience of the beatific vision, not less authentic than before. Seven years later Ramakrishna in the same way proved experimentally the truth of Christianity. He was now for a time completely absorbed in the idea of Christ, and had no room for any other thought. You might have supposed him

a convert. What really resulted was that he could now affirm on the basis of personal experience, "I have also practised all religions, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, and I have also followed the paths of the different Hindu sects. . . . The lake has many shores. At one the Hindu draws water in a pitcher, and calls it *jala*, at another the mussulman in leather bottles, and calls it *pāni*, at a third the Christian finds what he calls 'water'".

Such an understanding may be rare, but is absolutely normal in the East : as the *Bhagavad-Gītā* expresses it, "There is no deity that I am not, and in case any man be truly the worshipper of any deity whatever, it is I that am the cause of his devotion and its fruit. . . . Howsoever men approach Me, even so do I welcome them, for the path men take from every side is Mine". Similarly the *Bhakta Māla* : "No one is ignorant of the doctrines of his own religion. . . . Therefore let every man, so far as in him lieth, help the reading of the scriptures, whether those of his own church, or those of another." And similarly also in Islām, "My heart has become capable of every form. . . . it is a convent for Christian monks, a temple for idols, the place of pilgrimage at Mecca, the tables of the Torah, the book of the *Quran* : I follow the religion of Love, whichever way His camels take".

Such an understanding is rarer still, and one may say abnormal to the Western type of humanity. If the modern Christian does not quite endorse the conduct of Charlemagne's heroes at Saragossa,—“The synagogues they enter and the mosques, whose every wall with mallet and axes they shatter : they break in pieces small the idols . . . the heathen folk in crowds to the font baptismal are driven, to take Christ's yoke upon them. . . . Thus out of

heathen darkness have five-score thousand been redeemed, and be now true Christians", it is at least quite certain that for every man that has died by religious persecution in India, ten thousand have died in Europe, and equally certain that the activity of Christian missions still quite frankly endorses a programme of conversion by force,—the force of money, not indeed paid out in cash, but expended on education and medical aid bestowed with ulterior motives. "Force", as Lafcadio Hearn once wrote, "the principal instrument of Christian propagandism in the past, is still the force behind our missions". No greater offenders are to be found than missionaries against the commandment, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour". I do not however at all wish to dwell upon this point of view, but rather to point out that although religious tolerance in Europe has never as in Asia been founded upon the belief that all religions are true, but rather founded on a growing indifference to all religious doctrines, an intellectual basis for a willing tolerance of other forms of belief is by no means wanting in Christianity. John indeed speaks of the "True Light that lighteth every man". Even St. Thomas admits that some of the Gentiles who lived before Christ's temporal birth may have been saved. For as Clement of Alexandria had long since said, "There was always a natural manifestation of the one Almighty God, amongst all right-thinking men." Eckhart speaks of "One of our most ancient philosophers who found the truth long, long before God's birth, ere ever there was Christian faith at all as it is now", and again much more boldly, "He to whom God is different in one thing from another and to whom God is dearer in one thing than another, that man is a barbarian, still in the wilds, a child."

Note that "Merlyn made the round table in tokenyng of the roundenes of the world for by the round table is the world sygnifyed by ryghte. For all the world crysten and hethen repayren unto the round table . . . (that) by them which should be felawes of the round table the truth of the Sancgreal should be well knowen." (Malory, XIV. 2). The truth is with Blake when he says, "The religions of all nations are derived from each nation's different reception of the poetic genius\* which is everywhere called the spirit of prophecy. . . . As all men are alike (though infinitely various), so all religions, and as all similars have one source." The Vedic and Christian traditions are never tired of employing "Truth", "Being", and "Beauty", as preeminently fitting essential names of God. Now we are well aware that in this human world there cannot be a conceptual knowledge or expression of truth except in some way; just as there can be no perceptible beauty except of some kind. What is true in all truths, or what is beautiful in all beauties, cannot itself be any one of these truths or beauties. As Dionysius says, "If anyone in seeing God understood what he saw, he saw not God himself, but one of those things that are His." Belief in Revelation or Audition does not mean that the very words in which the truth is expressed in any case contain the truth but rather that they point to it, for as St. Thomas says, "Everything has truth of nature according to the degree in which it imitates the knowledge of God", "Our intellect considers God according to the mode derived from creatures", and finally "The thing known is in the knower according to the mode of the knower." All concepts of God, even the most nearly adequate, are thus man-made; as we say in India, "He takes

the forms that are imagined by His worshippers". Very surely He is not to be thought of as confined by or fully expressed by any of these forms, Who is Himself the single form of every form, and transcendent with respect to each and every form; it is from this point of view that many a Christian teacher has affirmed that "Nothing true can be said of God". The value of concepts, of any expression verbal or visible, *per verbum in intellectu conceptum*, is one of use; the concept is of value not as a thing in itself, but as dispositive to an essential vision, *not* in any likeness. The beauty of the formula, the verbal or visual icon, poignant as it may be in Christian gospel or Vedic liturgy, is not an end in itself, but referred to him who uses it, is an invitation. The purpose of any art, and no less of that highest art of theology, in which all other arts, whether literary or plastic subsist *per excellentiam*, is to teach, to delight, and above all to move (Augustine's *docere, delectare, movere*). An exclusive attachment to any one dogma, any one group of verbal or visual symbols, however pertinent, is an act of idolatry; the Truth itself is inexpressible.

If the image is His whose image it is, the colours and the art are ours. Whoever claims that his own manner of understanding and statement is the only true one, is moved not by the vision of God, but by spiritual pride. Such a believer, as Ibnu'l 'Arabi says, "praises none but himself, for his God is made by himself, and to praise the work is to praise the maker of it: its excellence or imperfection belongs to the maker. For this reason he blames the beliefs of others, which he would not do if he were just. . . . If he understood the saying of Junayd, 'The colour of the water is the colour of the vessel containing it', he would not interfere with

\* Vedic *Kairva*.

others, but would perceive God in every form and every belief. He has opinion, not knowledge: therefore God said, 'I am in my servant's opinion of Me', that is, 'I do not manifest myself to him save in the form of his belief'. God is absolute or unrestricted as He pleases; and the God of religious belief is subject to limitations, for He is the God who is contained in the heart of His servant". The Oriental Gnostic has no fault to find with any Catholic doctrine; judged by Vedic standards, one can say that Christianity is true and lovely, true so far as any formulation can be true, lovely in so far as any thing, as distinguished from One who is no thing, can be lovely.

Moreover, it can be positively affirmed that every notable Christian doctrine is also explicitly propounded in every other dialect of the primordial tradition: I refer to such doctrines as those of the eternal and temporal births, that of the single essence and two natures, that of the Father's impassibility, that of the significance of sacrifice, that of transubstantiation, that of the nature of the distinction between the contemplative and active lives and of both from the life of pleasure, that of eternity from aeviternity and time, and so forth. Literally hundreds of texts could be cited from Christian and Islamic, Vedic, Taoist and other scriptures and their patristic expositions, in close and sometimes literally verbal agreement. To cite a trio of instances at random, whereas Damascene has to say that "He Who Is, is the principal of all names applied to God", in the *Katha Upanishad* we have "He Is, by that alone is He to be apprehended": whereas St. Thomas says, "These things are said to be under the sun which are generated and corrupted", the *Satapatha Brâhmana* affirms that "Everything under the sun is in the power of death";

and whereas Dionysius speaks of That "Which not to see or know is really to see and know", The *Jaiminîya Upanishad Brâhmana* has it that "The thought of God in his by whom it is unthought, or if he thinks the thought he does not understand." All traditional teaching employs side by side the *via affirmative* and the *via remotionis*, and in this sense is in agreement with Boethius, that "Faith is a mean between contrary heresies." Sin is defined by the Thomist and in India in one and the same way as a "departure from the order to the end." All tradition is agreed that the last end of man is happiness.

On the other hand, while there can be only one metaphysics, there must be not merely a variety of religions, but a hierarchy of religions, in which the truth is more or less adequately expressed, according to the intellectual capacities of those whose religions they are. Nor do I mean to deny that there can be heterodox doctrines, properly to be condemned as heresies, but only that any and every belief is a heresy if it be regarded as the truth, and not merely as a signpost of the truth. Pantheism, for example, is equally a heresy from Christian, Islamic, and Hindu points of view; a confusion of things as they are in themselves with things as they are in God, of the essence of the participant with the participated Essence, is an egregious error, and yet not so great an error as to assume that the being of things as they are in themselves is altogether their own being. The distinction of essence from nature of the Sâṅkhya system is true from a certain point of view, and yet false when regarded from the standpoint of a higher synthesis, as in the Vedânta, and similarly in Christianity, where from one point of view essence and nature are the universe apart, and yet in the

simplicity of the First Cause are one impartite substance.

It is perfectly legitimate to feel that a given religion is more adequately true than another; to hold, for example, that Catholicism is more adequately true than Protestantism, or Hinduism than Buddhism. Real distinctions can be drawn: Christianity maintains for example that metaphysics, though the highest of the other sciences, is inferior to the sacred science of theology; Hinduism is primarily metaphysical, and only secondarily religious, hence the controversies as to the true significance of "deification", and hence it is that however much a Hindu may find himself in enthusiastic agreement with the angelic and celestial doctors (Thomas and Bonaventura), he is more at home with certain giants of Christian thought whose orthodoxy is suspect, I mean Erivgena, Eckhart, Behmen, Blake, and more at home with Plotinus than with the representatives of exoteric Christian orthodoxy; more at home with St. John than with St. James, more in sympathy with Christian Platonism than with Christian Aristotelianism, scarcely at all in sympathy with Protestant theologies, and far more in sympathy with Qabbalistic interpretations of Genesis and Exodus, than with any historical approach. So that we do not for a moment mean to maintain the impropriety of all dogmatic controversy. We must bear in mind that even within the framework of a presumably homogenous faith it is taken for granted that one and the same truths must be presented in various ways suited to the audience, and that this is not a matter of contradictory statement, but of "convenient means". What we do maintain is that all paths converge; that the Wayfarer, having already trodden a given path, will under all normal circumstances sooner reach that point at which all

progress ends,—“On reaching God, all progress ends”,—than if he retrace his steps and start afresh.

What we must *not* forget is that no one can finally pronounce upon the truth of a given religion, who has not lived it, as Ramakrishna lived both Christianity and Islam, as well as Hinduism; and that once convinced that only one's own truth is true, "It is", as Professor Briggs of Drew University lately remarked "the easiest thing imaginable to take the concepts of other faiths, abstract them from their contexts, and demolish them." For example, how easily the Islamic definition of Christianity as a polytheistic religion could be deduced from the considered statement of St. Thomas, that "We do not say *the only God*, because deity is common to several." (*Summa*, I, 31. 2c, Dominican Fathers' translation). In the same way a pantheistic definition of Christianity could easily be deduced from St. Thomas' "A thing has being by participation. . . We must consider . . . the emanation of all being from the universal cause, which is God." (*Summa*, I. 44. 1 ad 1 and 45 1c, Dominican Father's translation).

What is then in the last analysis the value of comparative religion? Certainly not to convince us that one mode of belief is the preparation for another, or to lead to a decision as to which is "best". One might as well regard ancient or exotic styles of art as preparations for and aspirations towards one's own. Nor can the value of this discipline be thought of as one conducing to the development of a single universally acceptable syncretic faith embodying all that is "best" in every faith; such a "faith" as this would be a mechanical and lifeless monstrosity, by no means a stream of living water, but a sort of religious Esperanto. Com-

parative religion can demonstrate that all religions spring from a common source, are as Jeremias says, the "dialects of a single spiritual speech". We cannot therefore take the formulæ of one religion and insert them in another without incongruity. One can recognize that many formulæ are identical in different religions; confront for example St. Thomas, "Creation, which is the emanation of all being from the not-being, which is nothing." (*Summa*, I, 45. 1c) with the Vedic "Being is engendered from non-being." (*asatah sad ajâyata*, RV. X. 72. 3), and such comparisons can be validly employed (even by the most orthodox) as what St. Thomas calls "extrinsic and probable proofs" of the validity of a given dogma.

But of greater value than this is the clarification that results when the formulæ of one tradition are collated with those of another. For as we have already seen, every tradition is necessarily a partial representation of the truth intended by tradition universally considered; in each tradition something is suppressed, or omitted, or obscure which in another may be found more extensively, more logically, or more brilliantly developed. What then is clear and full in one tradition can be used to develop the meaning of what may be hardly more than alluded to in another. Or even if in one tradition a given doctrine has been definitely named, a realization of the significance of this definition may lead to the recognition and correlation of a whole series of affirmations in another tradition, in all of which the same doctrine is implicit, but which had previously been overlooked in their relation to one another. It is thus a great advantage to be able to make use of the expression *Vedic exemplarism*; or conversely, to speak of Christian *yoga* immediately brings out

the analogy between St. Bernard's *consideratio*, *contemplatio*, and *raptus* with Sanskrit *dhâranâ*, *dhyanâ*, and *samâdhi*.

To many a Christian, no doubt, Sri Ramakrishna's primary attachment to the cult of the Great Mother gives offence. Nothing is indeed more usual than to consider that Christianity, whether for better or worse, adheres to purely masculine interpretations of divine being; the Christian speaks of a Father, but not of a Mother in Heaven, whereas in India the ancient love of the Magna Mater maintains itself at the present day on equal terms with that of the Propator. And yet the doctrine of the maternity of the divine nature is repeatedly, however reservedly, affirmed in Christian theology, fundamentally in that of the "two natures", more explicitly in that of the temporal and eternal nativities and in that of the Generation of the Son as a vital operation from conjoint principles,—*Procession Verbi in divinis dicitur generatio . . . quæ est operatio vitæ . . . et propter hoc proprie dicitur genitum et Filius.*" (St. Thomas, *Summa*, I. 27. 2, cf. I. 98. 2c "In every act of generation there is an active and a passive principle"). It is inasmuch as "Eternal filiation does not depend on a temporal mother" (*ib.* III. 35. 5 ad 2) that Eckhart can speak of the "Act of fecundation latent in eternity", and say that "It is God who has the treasure and the bride in Him", that the "Godhead wantons with the Word", and that "His birth in *Mary* ghostly was to God better pleasing than His nativity of her in the flesh". One sees that when St. Thomas speaks of "that Nature by which the Father begets" (*Summa*, I. 41. 5) the reference is really to the Magna Mater, the Vedic Aditi, not to mention other names of the One Madonna, and sees what is really meant by the otherwise

obscure assertion that notwithstanding primary matter "recedes from likeness to God, yet . . . it retains a certain likeness to the divine being" (ib. I. 14. 11 ad 8). *Natura naturata* indeed "retains" a certain likeness to "Natura naturans, Creatrix, Deus": Mother Earth to Mother Nature, Mary in the flesh to Mary ghostly. One need only consider Genesis I. 27 "To the image of God He created him; male and female He created them" in connection with Galatians III. 28, "According to the image of Him that created him, where there is neither male nor female" to realize that whereas Essence and Nature in *divinis* are one simple substance without composition, the very fact that the conjoint principles can be separately exemplified is proof that the Supreme Identity can be truly spoken of either as Father or as Mother, or as Father-Mother, just as in the Vedas the Divine "Parents" are indifferently "Fathers" (*pitārā*, du. masc.) or "Mothers" (*mātārā*, du. fem.), or as "That One, spirated, despirated" (*tad ekam ānīt avātam*, RV. X. 120. 2, where no gender is implied, cf. Eckhart's "Where these two abysms hang, equally spirated, despirated, there is the Supreme Being").

Thus we may go so far as to assert on behalf of a true "comparative religion", that however a religion may be self-sufficient if it be followed to the very end to which it is directed, there can hardly be supposed a way so plain that it could not here and there be better illuminated by other lights than that of the pilgrim's private lantern, the light of any lantern being only a refraction of the Light of lights. A diversity of routes is not merely appropriate to a diversity of travellers, who are neither all alike, nor start from one and the same point, but may be of incalculable aid to any traveller who can

rightly read the map; for where all roads converge, there can be none of them that does not help to clarify the true position of the centre of the maze, "short of which we are still in a duality". Hence we say that the very implications of the phrase "religious tolerance" are to be avoided: diversity of faith is not a matter for unwilling "toleration", but of divine appointment. And this will hold good even if we sincerely believe that other faiths are inferior to our own, and in this sense relatively "evil": for as Augustine says, "The admirable beauty of the universe is made up of all things. In which even what is called evil, well-ordered and in its place, is the eminent commendation of what is good" (*Enchir* XIII), whom St. Thomas quotes with approval, adding that "The universe, the present creation being supposed, cannot be better, because of the most beautiful order given to things by God." (*Summa*, I, 48. 1 and I, 25. 6 ad 3). As Augustine also says, "There is no evil in things, but only in the sinner's misuse of them." (*De Dod. Christ* III. 12) As to the sinner's "misuse", who can assure us of that, with respect to which it has been said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged"?

In the matter of direction towards the Kingdom of Heaven "within you"\*, the modern world is far more lacking in the will to seek, than likely to be led astray by false direction. From the Satanic point of view there could hardly be imagined a better activity than to be engaged in the "conversion of the heathen" from one to another body of dogmas: that, surely, was not what was meant by the injunction, "Go thou and preach the Kingdom of God",—or was He mistaken, when He said "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you."?

\* Sanskrit *hrdayākāṣe*, *antarbhūtasya kṛte*.

# SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND THE MODERN WORLD

By SIR S. RADHAKRISHNAN

It is not necessary to speak of the great influence of Ramakrishna on modern thought. It has become a part of India's history, and there is no necessity to emphasize Ramakrishna's achievements. But it is out of a sense of self-respect that we are gathered to celebrate the centenary of that great saint who has given the message, "Truth is one, sages call it by various names." The holding of the Parliament of Religions is most significant. It was not unknown in ancient times.

## EXAMPLE AND PRECEPT

In these days of communal differences, which are due not so much to religious motives as to economic and political causes, the Parliament of Religions is an important step to bring about a better understanding. The special contribution of Ramakrishna was that he put to the test the religious views by the logic of life, and established the equality of all religions by example and precept.

The idea of Parliament of Religions is consistent with the spirit of mutual appreciation and toleration which is associated with the great mystic traditions of Hindu religion.

The concepts of religion is sought to be explained by various persons according to their views and experiences. Those who worship ignorance are described, in the Upanishad, as entering darkness and those who worship knowledge as entering greater darkness. There are people who are conceited in their ignorance just as there are persons who are conceited in their knowledge. At present, though people find satisfac-

tion of their physical and psychological needs, though they have wealth, they have still a hunger within, which they cannot satisfy. The happenings in the world, the victory achieved by the sword, the great calamities that have visited mankind, must make men think seriously, whether beneath all these there is any fundamental spiritual assurance, whether there is anything Real behind the apparently transient.

So long as human beings are composed of the perishable and imperishable, they cannot but ask themselves the question whether the transient is the only reality, whether the temporary is the only permanent.

There are others conceited in their knowledge, claiming to provide a solution for all problems, claiming to dispel the great mystery, thinking that they possess omniscient knowledge. Neither group is capable of seeing reality. For there is something beyond ignorance and knowledge. After all their intellectual discoveries and rational explanations, men are at one time or other inescapably confronted with the question: "Is there not something beyond all these? Is there no other power or purpose behind these passing clouds?"

When such questions are raised, men cannot be satisfied with such explanations as that the relative is the absolute, the transient is the permanent and similar expressions. The wonder of existence is a puzzle that confronts man for ever.

## THE FAILURE OF REASON

The results of reason, have been great, but greater have been the



failures of reason. We are today more enlightened. The barbarians of old received solace and consolation from the thought of the 'mystery of the divine'. Science has put an end to that. But our life has become dull and prosaic.

But a world perfectly understood is no world at all, a problem completely solved is no problem at all. Likewise, a God that is fully understood is no God at all. The fundamental difference between the Eastern and Western outlook is that the East recognizes the mystery that is divine and admits man's inability to fathom that mystery. It has contented itself with efforts to explore that mystery. The West thinks it is possible to explore all realities, but it is puzzled when certain realities do not offer a solution.

For a correct approach to reality, it is necessary to abandon the conceit of ignorance and the conceit of knowledge. The proper attitude is that of the mystical tradition of the East. One might grasp reality through revelation, through intuition, but not through the method of the intellect. It cannot be reached through a sharpening of the intellect by mere learning. Mere individual development can never take men to the heart of reality.

#### MAN'S STUPIDITY AND SELFISHNESS

One of the speakers have referred to the affront to civilization that has been perpetrated in Africa. That is a question that has occurred to me many times. How is it that in spite of the great intellectual attainments and scientific advance made by men it has not been possible to translate their great aspirations and higher ideals into actuality? The answer to that question lies in the mistaking of true religion for dogma.

When I ponder over this question I have always been reminded of the statue of Rodin—a physical and intellectual giant, perfect in every respect, but bending down his head in a thoughtful mood. What was wrong with that colossal man? It spoke of the utter impotence of man, because of his split personality. Man still has in him the germs of stupidity and selfishness. The world needs eradication of these germs. So long as they exist, wars are inevitable. There is division in the world, because there is division in the soul of man. He is still some kind of uncontrollable animal, a clever animal, but nothing more than that. The intellectual progress has not touched the fundamental weaknesses of mankind. He has not the courage to say, "Get thee behind me, Satan!"

People care for the hygiene of the bodies. They seem to care little about the hygiene of the soul.

So long as these germs are there wars are inevitable. Wars take place in the world, because, there is war in the soul of man himself. There is dissension in the inner self. The split-self continues to exist. Mankind remains no more than a horde of clever animals.

#### RAMAKRISHNA'S CONCEPTION OF RELIGION

Ramakrishna's conception of religion was practice of the presence of God. It is this mystical tradition with which ancient religion was associated. There are the religious scriptures. They are to be understood. Their meaning and comprehension is an experience in itself. The Divine Music of these scriptures cannot be translated into words, which will express the inexhaustibleness of truth. The silent worship when one is in communion with God is an experience which provides a negative

explanation of the existence of the Supreme Power. But man being human, must find a logical embodiment of that supreme truth. This truth is transcendental and refuses to be defined by formulas and categories. To this extent, the existence of God is proved, —only in a negative way.

Critics again may say that mere non-being is nothing. That only proves the intellectual inefficiency of such critics. Simply because one does not find an empirical embodiment for the Fundamental Reality, it appears altogether non-existent to the feeble-minded.

Then the critics might attempt to translate the Reality in the highest terms of human intelligence. Life can understand life. Spiritual matters can be comprehended by Spirituality. Every one has the divine spark in him. If he cannot comprehend the Supreme Truth, he can at least apprehend it. If man's highest category is 'Purusha' (Person), then the Supreme Reality can be described as the 'Uttama Purusha' (Supreme Person). This Uttama Purusha supplements the characteristics of the human being.

Thus, though the Reality cannot be conveyed through the medium of language, these may be considered the means of doing that : First there is the austerity of silence. Then there is the method of negative description, and finally the apprehension of God through the divine in one's self.

#### RELIGIOUS TOLERATION

All these are ways of expressing one and the same truth. All the religions of the world take their stand on the supreme truth. But this kind of toleration is not to be mistaken for a dislike of dogma. It is not a revolt against conservatism. It is to be regarded as a positive course of nature, a spiritual

development which recognizes the root-ness of religions in one and the same fundamental truth.

It would be untrue to say that God revealed himself exclusively to any one person or sect. The greatness of the teaching of Ramakrishna lies in the fact that he was able to appreciate and recognize the essential background and unity in all the different faiths and religions.

#### THE PRESENT CONDITION OF INDIA

As regards the present-day conditions of India the question arises, why in spite of our pretensions to spirituality, we are in such conditions as obtain all over the country?

Upto the age of Renaissance and Reformation in the West, the East kept pace with the West on the path of progress. Thereafter the East lagged behind while the West continued on its march. This is due to the resistance to change, offered by the East, and the readiness to change which characterizes the West. This has resulted in the progress of the West and the stagnation of the East. The difference between the East and the West is the same as the difference between the old Egyptian and the young Greek of ancient times. The Greek kept an open mind, without shutting out ideas, whereas the Egyptian priest represented orthodoxy, represented a long memory of the past pressing down on him.

#### IN THE NAME OF ORTHODOXY

At present in the name of orthodoxy the Indians close their minds, shut out new ideas which have contributed towards progress. When religion in the country was progressive, the Indians possessed mental resilience, and flexibility and elasticity of temper.

In every age there were reformers, who were repudiated by orthodoxy ;

the great Rishis and teachers of the past who had contributed towards progress, were denounced by others. Sankaracharya, who is today claimed to represent orthodoxy, was in his days, denounced as a heretic by Mandana-mishra. That very heretic at present has become the champion of orthodoxy.

If today the Indians find themselves in a condition of stagnation, it is because they have given up that attitude of instinctive challenge to authority, a sort of rebellion against things repugnant to reason. Such an outlook would have carried them forward on their march.

#### PRIESTS v. PROPHETS

Today, some people believe that a "parliament of no religions" would solve the problems of the world, because religions have failed to solve them. But such a solution, is impossible. No doubt the organized religions are the outcome of the efforts of priests who have no real insight at truth. The religion as organized by the priests is not the same religion as founded by the prophets.

But the absence of religion will not solve the problems. People cannot be mere contented cattle, even if all their

worldly needs were satisfied. In every human being, there is the dream of a higher life, and if this dream is not operative, man cannot call himself a human being. So long as higher aspirations exist in man, so long as there exists a perpetual endeavour, a ceaseless striving for something higher, nobler and better, man cannot but be a religious being.

#### THE GREATEST PRAYER

God never addresses congregations. It is a private communion which each individual has to establish with God, in his own way. Beneath all different variations and details, Religion has one authentic Voice calling for universal compassion. Great religious teachers never said that if a man did not accept their respective teachings, he would be doomed. The basic truth was laid down in every religion that the performance of good to humanity constituted a true religious life.

True religion must establish Universal Brotherhood. The greatest prayer is :

"May all cross the difficult places of life,

"May all see the face of happiness,

"May all attain the Wisdom,

"May all rejoice everywhere."

## EASTERN TOLERANCE AND CHRISTIANITY

BY REV. WENDELL PHILLIPS

I am sure that some of you are saying, "Well, what is a Christian Minister doing here?" Not that this is a strange place for a Christian Minister at all, but many people think it is.

Do you know, I had to tell Swami Nikhilananda not to announce too widely in New Rochelle the fact that I was going to be here, for some of

my good friends who heard about it came and said to me, "Well now, here, what are you doing? Are you quite all right?"

I am glad to be here. I am very happy to say that I believe that Christianity has still a great deal to learn from the Orient.

Now, I have good authority for say-

ing that, for when Christian missionaries went out into India some years ago, Phillips Brooks, perhaps our greatest Christian preacher, said, "I am very happy to see Christianity going into India, not so much because Christianity will mean a great deal to India, but because India will give a great deal to Christianity."

It would be well for us to consider for a few moments what the Orient, and what Ramakrishna in particular has brought and is bringing and will bring to Christianity. In the first place, I believe the Orient is bringing us a sense of the reality of the unseen world.

Now, I am not a mystic. I wish I were. Like the great disciple of Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, I have both my feet on the ground, and I am not carried away by ecstasies. I do not put much stock in visions which one man can see and which no other man can see. I don't understand a man like this, who for twelve years can go off and wander about and let his mind wander and then come back on the earth. My religion does not quite understand a man who can teach another man and have him go from one form into another, and have that second man changed. That to me is a strange religion.

But these things are real. I don't understand them. I don't understand radio; I don't understand hypnotism; I don't understand mathematics; I don't understand many things, but these things are real. I believe that the Orient is going to show us of the West how real they are. I believe Jesus is being revealed more clearly for us through the eyes of the East. I believe Jesus had more of the spirit of this man (Ramakrishna) in him than we realize. We speak of a man having psychic qualities, of having some energy flow from him into other people and

healing them. Jesus had that, and we are just beginning to realize it.

How did He work these miracles? Because He had this same power which we are just beginning to look into; He was clairvoyant; He knew beforehand what people were thinking; He knew, as these men knew, what was going to happen. These things are strange; we hear nowadays of levitation and of a man who in a room is seen to rise off the floor and then go back again, and then we think of Jesus walking on the water. What connection is there?

We read of the materialization of bodies, of men who leave this body and go into another body, pass through doors, pass through walls, and obstructions. Jesus, we read, did that. Men in our days are discovering scientifically that these things are possible. Strange things are happening which I do not understand, but which have long been happening in the East, and which we now are seeing for the first time.

Just last week the wife of Sir Conan Doyle, who died some years ago, was trying to reach him, and she went to a medium and asked if she could reach her husband, and the medium tried to get the spirit of Sir Conan Doyle. And he got his spirit. Mrs. Doyle was very, very ill of a serious disease, and the spirit of Sir Conan Doyle, who had been a doctor when he was on this earth, a medical doctor, came through and said, "Take down carefully what I am going to tell you. I am going to give you the full description of my wife's illness," and he gave the illness word by word. The woman had been taken to a hospital, where the doctors made a careful study, a careful diagnosis, and various tests and then wrote down their results, the results of their findings. And after all that had been done, the son of Sir Conan Doyle who had a

message from the medium carried it to the doctors, and the doctors said, "Where did you get this? It is exactly what the trouble is with your mother."

Those things are happening. I don't understand them, but they are real and we today are learning of these things which have been coming to us in echoes out of the East. Science today is telling us that these things are true. Matter and mind are now being discovered. What is matter? What is mind? What is the spirit? We do not know. We are just beginning to find out. I am told that the physicists have lately invented a machine which can spin a wheel, at the rate of, I believe, twenty-five thousand revolutions a minute, or a second, or some such preposterous speed—it doesn't matter—they can build a machine to spin that wheel, but they cannot build a wheel which will stand it. The very speed on that wheel will break it, and it will float off into thin air, not in a piece by itself, but simply that the wheel disappears and cannot be found. It goes off into energy, into mind, into spirit—I do not know.

Strange things are happening in the world today, and science is now telling us so.

What is matter? If I sound a note, you hear my voice. We hear about eight octaves of sound, eight or ten of them on the piano, or on the organ, but there are dozens of octaves of sound or of light, which we, with our poor human eyes and ears, cannot see or hear. What is that matter? Spirit? Mind? Do men like this have the key to those hidden octaves which we do not understand? Think of the octaves of sight! There are sixty-four octaves of sight. We have just one. Our little pitiful human eyes can see but just one octave. The photographic plates are sensitive to six of these oct-

aves of ultra-violet rays, they are sensitive to ten of these octaves of infra-red rays, and to seventeen of X-rays, and the rest of the rays which are made up of gamma rays, wireless rays—sixty-four of them, and we only see one!

If we know so little of the physical world, how little then do we know of the spiritual world even those of us who are Christians?

Now, in the second place I believe we can learn from the teachings of Ramakrishna not only the mysteries of the unseen world, but we can learn once again that great truth that God is a universal God; He is not the God of the Christians, Jews, of the Mohammedans—He is the God of all. You remember the word of Ramakrishna himself when he sent out his disciples. He said, "Above all let there be no barriers."

No barriers! The Christians must learn that. I spent three years in the Orient, in the Mohammedan world. There they have less barriers than we Christians. There is no barrier of colour there. It is a beautiful thing to see a world that exists with no barrier of colour. All men are brothers. Oh, we Christians surely have something to learn of this beautiful experience of Ramakrishna, and to gather from that experience the principles of Christianity, the teachings of our Christ. We have the teachings, but this man has had the experiences of the Christ. How blind we are! How blind we are! Christ, the Oriental, why should he come to us? Who are we? Anglo-Saxon, Western people. What does Christianity have to do with us?

I think one of the most beautiful things about this man was the fact that on an occasion the disciples were gathered around that fire fifty years after the birth of Ramakrishna, and there Vivekananda was telling of the

story of Christ; and these men, the disciples, took vows that they, like Christ would go out into the world and serve Him as they served their God, and after these vows were taken, the disciples discovered that it was Christmas Eve, the night before the birth of Christ.

Oh, we Christians, must learn that God is universal. We have been too tribal; we must learn that God wishes well to no single group, no single race, no single tribe, but that He loves all people. There is a legend of Katamabutka, who was just about to enter Nirvana, to eternal rest. He stopped just before he got there and said, "Wait, there are others who are not here. I shall not enter into my eternal rest until the very devils themselves are walking in the paths of peace."

There is a legend also that Jesus in

those hidden years when we lose track of him between the period of his boyhood and his manhood went out into the Orient, into Persia, India, and into Tibet, and learned a great deal from the wisdom of the men he found there. And this legend tells us that in Tibet in a certain monastery there is an inscription on the wall that says; "Here lives Saint Jesus, best of the sons of men." And then there is a description of what he did there during the years. I believe, of course, it is legend, but it is a beautiful legend that our Lord turned to the Orient, that he might more fully understand God and man.

We here tonight, all of us, we Christians especially, can turn once more to the Orient to gain there a clearer vision of the truth, to gain there a clearer vision of God, of God the Father of us all.

## A LITANY TO RAMAKRISHNA

BY HENRIETTA HOLMES EARLE

Master of song and joy Thou art  
A very Krishna Incarnate—  
Master of wisdom's deepest heart  
To Thee our love we consecrate.

Master of knowledge limitless  
—A very Buddha Incarnate—  
Master of heaven's gifts, nothing less,  
To Thee our love we consecrate.

Master of love and tender ways  
—A very Christ Incarnate—  
Master of Truth that always stays  
To Thee our love is consecrate.

Master of joy, wisdom and love  
—A very God Incarnate—  
Master who comes through our life from  
above  
To Thee our life is consecrate.

# THE APPEAL OF THE GITA TO THE INDIVIDUAL

BY R. RAMAKRISHNAN, M.A., L.T.

The *Bhagavad-Gitā* is regarded on all hands as the *Bible* of Hinduism. Every Hindu, to whatever sect he or she may belong, to whatever particular system of philosophy he or she may owe allegiance, regards the *Gitā* as his or her spiritual guide. The daily study of the *Gitā*, and ceaseless meditation on its teachings are thought of as the primary duties of the Hindus. It is not uncommon even now to find persons who, as they return home after a bath or are on their way to a shrine, recite the *Gitā* from beginning to end, believing that such recitation will confer great religious merit by attuning the mind to noble thoughts. The saint who has reached the very last plane of spiritual practice and the novice who is just on the threshold of the spiritual path, both alike resort to the *Gitā* for light and guidance. The Monist, the Qualified Monist, the Dualist, and the Pluralist all quote the *Gitā* in support of the theological and philosophical positions taken by them. Even persons and societies working for mere material ends take a quotation from the *Gitā* for their motto. The appeal of the *Gitā* is thus universal; age does not wither it, nor does custom stale its infinite variety. It denies help to no one; according to the needs of each and in consonance with the capacities of each, it confers solace, and bestows bliss.

In view of this comprehensive nature of its appeal, it is rather surprising to note the fact that the *Gitā* is not an independent treatise in itself. It is not a book written at the table with the object of elucidating philosophical principles to the populace. It is a small

production, consisting of only seven hundred verses, and can easily be read from cover to cover in an hour and a half. It is in the nature of a conversation between a wise person and a disciple. The elucidation of the *Gitā* has vital connections with the circumstances of its exposition. It owes its exposition to particular circumstances—and curiously enough they were certainly not ideal for any philosophical intercourse or spiritual teaching. We must remember then that the *Gitā* is a part, and a very infinitesimal one, of the famous epic the *Mahābhārata* which contains in main an account of the long animosity between two branches of a royal family. The peculiar circumstances which led to the teaching of the *Gitā* are quite well known. When the Pāndava brothers assembled on the battlefield in order to defeat the Kaurava hosts who denied to them their legitimate possessions and turned a deaf ear to all missions for a peaceful settlement, Arjuna, the bravest and the manliest (in its widest sense) of the Pāndavas, suddenly refused to fight, being unwilling to acquire even kingship as a result of immense bloodshed. Sri Krishna, 'the villain of the piece', then instructed him as to what his duties were, and persuaded Arjuna to agree to fight. The *Gitā* is merely the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna on the field of battle and on the eve of war. It is really astonishing that a series of teachings expounded in such a very uncongenial atmosphere should have become an object of reverent study in Ashramas and Tapovanas. There must be something then in the *Gitā*

which transcends the limitations of the physical environments of its original utterance, something which in addition to solving very satisfactorily the thorny problem that was the immediate cause of its appearance has deep significance to the struggles of different human beings in different stages of evolution. It is as if Sri Krishna did not expound the *Gītā* to Arjuna alone, for the specific purpose of making him perform his duty, unpleasant certainly, but nevertheless a duty, but uttered it separately to each individual, then living and yet to be born. It will be an interesting study to examine in what manner the *Gītā* satisfies a felt want, in what way it fills a gap in, how it fits into, the life of every human being.

Some day in his life every man will find himself on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, and what is more, find himself placed in the same dilemma as Arjuna. Arjuna then is symbolical of man, and we may add, of the man who is out to secure his birthright that he has been disinherited of. Divinity is man's native state, but owing to several causes, man has been banished from his motherland and is now an inhabitant of an alien land peopled by beings with whom he has cultivated close acquaintance and whom he loves dearly. The urge for returning to the original home is never absent in him, though the pleasures and attractions of his present abode sometimes repress that urge and make it dormant. And a day comes when the urge grows mutinous and irrepressible and turns into a burning passion. Man sets off towards his distant home, but the ties that he has created and the bondages that he has brought on himself are too strong to be snapped by a mere wish of the mind, and he finds it well-nigh impossible to tear himself away from his associations. He gives way to melancholy and despair.

Like the Lotos-eaters, he would rather not return to his native land. The trouble of renouncing pleasing companionship seems to him not worth while. The great warrior who decides to go on a long journey cannot but cast wistful glances on the familiar things and scenes which contributed to his happiness till now. The prisoner long for freedom, but a long association with the glittering chains of bondage he made him love them, and his heart melts in pity at the thought of breaking them. The bird in the cage long for the freedom of the sky, but it has accustomed to the cage so much that it would rather not abandon it. In other words, the bound soul in search of liberation has first to free himself from all associations which cheered his life till now. He can build the structure of divinity only on the foundations of extreme renunciation. He has to consign to the flames all his pet fancies and thoughts, all his favourite companions and mates, and only after thus stripping himself naked of all that hitherto encumbered him can he hope to be clothed in heavenly robes. Home, family, wealth, power, fame, everything that makes earthly life colourful and worthwhile—all these have to be thrown away before the blessed state can be realized. But it is not without a wrench of the heart that the aspirant after liberation can consent to sacrifice these sweet old things. All the things that man has been wedded to till now stand like an army before him, obstructing his march towards his golden goal and before he can take one forward step he must slay these hosts. True, he has the ability to slay them, but he also has soft feelings and tender emotions, and as he sees the erstwhile companions arrayed before him, and notices the tears of sorrow in the eyes of one, a



the prayerful glances of another, and also remembers how each has been tied to him by warmth of affection only till recently, a great pity enters his heart, and he drops down his bow and arrow, refusing to kill the loving and beloved relatives for the sake of a doubtful gain and a problematical profit. This pity, though seemingly a virtue, is really a weakness, for it obstructs the inevitable growth of the individual. Arjuna is thus symbolical of the human soul at the parting of the ways, at the point where he has to sacrifice his all and enter a new phase of life.

Someone must needs lift the despondent soul, teach him the true wisdom, and enable him to see things in true perspective. This duty of illuminating the dark front is performed by the Merciful Lord, and He becomes the Teacher and Guru. Sri Krishna who fulfils the rôle of the Guru to Arjuna is really the Guru of every human being in all stages and circumstances of life. Hence is the *Gītā* capable of affording light to all beings and of affording satisfactory solutions to all the thorny problems of life.

There is another reason why the *Gītā* is capable of such wide appeal. It must always be remembered that human life is one indivisible whole and a unitary entity; it can never be divided into compartments. Now, religion to be genuine and satisfactory must embrace the whole life; in all its aspects. We cannot have a separate code of life for the hour of meditation and the precincts of the shrine, and another different code for the working hour and the premises of the workshop. A religious-minded person must be able to reflect his religious-mindedness in the smallest of his actions. Religion is not to be confined to special hours of the day and to particular localities. Will it suffice for instance, if a man keeps his

body pure only when he enters the temple or does his ablutions? The body must be pure throughout the day. So there is nothing really strange in the *Gītā* having been preached on the battlefield. The battlefield is the scene of the fiercest activity, but even that place must admit of the practical application of true religious principles. Life itself is a great battlefield. So when Sri Krishna did not remove Arjuna to the quietness of a hermitage, but chose to preach to him the highest philosophical truths amidst the din and tumult of war, He only demonstrated that philosophy was not meant for forests and shady retreats, and that it was not the sole monopoly of sages and people who have retired from the toil of life, but that it was meant for application in the busiest quarters of the globe and that the soldier and the labourer, the very hewers of wood and drawers of water had every right and every possibility to draw inspiration and solace from it. The vision of "the Charioteer of Arjuna, standing on His chariot between the contending hosts, His left hand curbing the fiery steeds, His eagle glance sweeping over the vast army, and as if by instinct weighing every detail of the battle-array of both parties", and at the same time, as it were, thrilling the awe-struck Arjuna by expounding to him most marvellous secrets of work is a glorious vision indeed, but it is a vision containing a mighty truth also. The truth is that life cannot be divided artificially into the spiritual and secular, that the man of spirituality will be spiritually endowed not merely in the hour of contemplation, but also in the hour of activity.

Apart from this broad, general similarity between the situation in which Arjuna found himself on the battlefield and the situation in which the aspirant after realization finds himself placed,

there are passages in the *Gītā* which touch the reader most intimately. Such passages have a direct and a very irresistible appeal to the individual. Here and there in the *Gītā* are verses wherein Sri Krishna makes deeply personal references to Arjuna, verses which show extraordinary solicitude, and which are capable of affording great consolation to the struggling human being in the mire of despair. But these verses are so uttered that they appeal with equal force to all persons listening to them. It is as if when we study the *Gītā* Arjuna recedes into the background, and we stand face to face with Sri Krishna; and the Eternal Teacher talks to us the same words which He has been repeating to thousands of beings, which nevertheless never become monotonous, but ever keep a freshness and original charm. These individualistic notes therefore serve to transform the *Gītā* into a dialogue between any and every reader on the one hand, and the Great Lord on the other. A review of such personal references will clarify this point still further.

While bringing to the notice of Arjuna the hoary and imperishable nature of the Yoga preached by Him (Sri Krishna), the Lord says, "I have this day told thee that same ancient Yoga, for thou art my devotee, and my friend . . .". How consoling it is for the aspirant to be told by the Lord Himself that he is His friend and devotee! Such an assurance gives rise to self-confidence and courage.

Again and again in the course of the *Gītā* we find Sri Krishna addressing Arjuna by names which reveal unique intimacy between the two. Often does He address His hearer as 'Scorcher of foes', 'Tiger among men' etc. Such epithets unconsciously rouse in the hearer's being a confidence in his being

able to accomplish great things; it is as if they induce the coiled-up serpent of energy to stretch itself and act with vigour.

"Whenever there is decline of Dharma, and rise of Adharma", says Sri Krishna, "then I body Myself forth. For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of Dharma, I come into being in every age". This statement refers not merely to the operation of a Law in the functioning of the cosmic universe, but also to the working of a principle in the development of the individual soul. Whenever in the human constitution evil dominates, then the Lord takes immediate steps to enthrone good in its proper place. Evil can never permanently conquer man. Evil itself is not a final entity; it is but a phase of life; evil too has to march on and turn into good and also into that which is beyond good. These verses bring us an assurance that in the war between good and evil which goes on in man, the Lord's forces are arrayed on the side of good which in consequence is bound to succeed. The fight for progress of the human soul is never unaided, never lonely, never a losing concern. The Lord is always at our back pushing us forward. He is more eager than even we for the establishment of equilibrium in our being.

But lest this assurance be misunderstood and misconstrued as supporting the needlessness of any effort on the part of the individual, the Lord says, "A man should uplift himself by his own self, so let him not weaken this self. For this self is the friend of oneself, and this self is the enemy of oneself." Hence personal effort is indispensable. It is true that while we place one step forward towards God, God comes towards us by tenfold the distance we traverse. It is true that

where man extends one hand to God. He lends him support with both His hands. But the initiative must come from man. Often when darkness and lethargy oppress man, this exposition of Sri Krishna of the possibility of man being his own friend or foe gives him strength to shake off himself free from the impediments to his vision of light.

Spiritual development, like all other fields of progress, is not an even march, not a continuous pushing-on. Its motion is wave-like; it has its boom and its slump, its ups and downs. And nothing worries the young aspirant so much as these frequently recurring falls. A fall unnerves him to a great extent and makes him feel that all the strain he subjected himself to and the energy he expended in order to achieve a small instalment of progress have been a huge waste in the face of the subsequent fall. How often have aspirants been perplexed by the sudden descent of the mind into gross sensuality after a prolonged soaring in the high heavens of contemplation! But in such moments of despair come to us the words of the *Gītā*, "The doer of good never comes to grief"—words which teach us that no effort in the spiritual world is ever lost, no good thought ever goes to waste, that the seed sown will not wither, but will surely sprout some day.

Inferiority-complex of any sort is a great enemy to spiritual progress. The spiritual aspirant has to fight against heavy odds, and unless he possesses strength born of an intense consciousness of his noble heritage and supreme destiny, he cannot make much headway. While pride must be avoided on the one hand, because it makes us rather tipsy and clouds our vision, a feeling of helplessness and despair, a sense of smallness and unimportance must also be kept afar. The spiritual

aspirant is a rare man, and the consciousness of his being out of the ordinary and the common place, of his being poised high above the trivialities and the narrowness of the everyday world will give him great vigour and energy in his march towards the goal. Sri Krishna says, "One, perchance, in thousands of men, strives for perfection." But the spiritual path is so hard and such a long process that failures in the initial stage are quite common, and immediate spectacular results are out of the question. Patience is needed in this field more than in any other, and failures are more truly stepping stones to success in this sphere than in any other. So the Lord adds, "And one, perchance, among the blessed ones, striving thus, knows Me in reality".

The Preacher on the field of Kurukshetra again speaks to every individual on earth and not merely to His immediate disciple when, for instance, He says, "Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou offerest in sacrifice, whatever thou givest away, whatever austerity thou practisest, do that as an offering unto Me." In this way alone can one have ceaseless communion with the Divine Entity. Whether we know it or not, we always live and move and work in the bosom of the Universal Being. Not for a second can we be free from contact with that Being. But a knowledge of this truth is what is required. It is through connecting every small detail of our life with the Lord that we can ultimately realize Him.

Very often we hear ignorant men saying that the Lord has been favouring one and been particularly unkind to another. We feel at times that the Lord is far away from us, and that though to a Christ or a Chaitanya He was dear and near, He may not really

care a brass farthing for us. How comfortable indeed it is in such moments of despair to remember the words of the *Gītā* which say, "I am the same to all beings : to Me there is none hateful nor dear. But those who worship Me with devotion are in Me, and I too am in them."! Complaints of partiality against God are as absurd as saying that fire is hot in one house and not so in another.

Spiritual life is like a second birth, and when one enters it, nothing oppresses one so much as the memory of past misdeeds. This memory unnerves the aspirant a good deal. To such those as are worried by thoughts of the enormity of past wickedness come the reassuring words of the Lord, "Even if the very wicked worship Me, with devotion to none else, he should be regarded as good, for he has rightly resolved. Soon does he become righteous, and attains to eternal peace : boldly canst thou proclaim that My devotee is never destroyed."

Again, what a mighty healing touch of intimate personal appeal the following advice of the Lord has! "Having obtained this transeient joyless world, worship thou Me. Fill thy mind with Me, be My devotee, sacrifice unto Me, bow down to Me, thus having made thy heart steadfast in Me, taking Me as the Supreme Goal, thou shalt come to Me."

The spiritual aspirant has to be born anew before he can advance a step; he has to cast off his old garments and don new ones; he has to forget the very memory of his past life, and acquire a new vision. The material world in which he was wallowing till now has to be deserted by him. He must enter a new world of different values and different ideas. One cannot live in both the worlds. What is dark and non-existent for the common people

has to become to him radiant and solely true. But the Lord in His eternal kindness bestows on us the Vision Divine even as we enter the path. The Lord's words to Arjuna, "I give thee supersensuous sight; behold My Yoga Power Supreme" give expression to this fact.

The Vision Supreme is said to be of such great brilliance that the devotee who beholds It is almost overpowered with excess of light. And in the deeply felt presence of the Supreme Being which exists supporting this whole world by a mere portion of Itself, the individual soul trembles at the ineffable glory he witnesses, and feels awkward to remember how till then his conception of God was very crude and narrow. His comprehension of God till then was determined by the extent of his own humble knowledge. But now after seeing the Universal Form of the Lord he realizes how tremendous Its dimensions are. This truth is most poetically expressed in the *Gītā* by Arjuna when he says to the Universal Form of Sri Krishna, "Whatever I have presumptuously said from carelessness or love, addressing Thee as 'O Krishna, O Yādava, O friend,' regarding Thee merely as a friend, unconscious of this Thy greatness - in whatever way I may have been disrespectful to Thee in fun, while waking, reposing, sitting or at meals, when alone with Thee, O Achyuta, or in company—I implore Thee Immeasurable One, to forgive all this."

Yet another instance wherein Sri Krishna comes very near the individual soul studying the *Gītā* is found in these simple, but profoundly moving utterances of His wherein He unfolds as it were great spiritual secrets : "Fix thy mind on Me only, place thy intellect in Me : thou shalt no doubt live in Me hereafter. If thou art unable to fix

thy mind steadily on Me, then, by Abhyâsa-Yoga, do thou seek to reach Me. If also thou art unable to practise Abhyâsa, be thou intent on doing actions for My sake. Even by doing actions for My sake, thou shalt attain perfection. If thou art unable to do even this, then taking refuge in Me, and being self-controlled abandon the fruit of all action."

In the course of His preaching, Sri Krishna distinguishes between the qualities of a person born for a divine state and those of a person born for a demoniac state. Therein He says, "The divine state is deemed as mature for liberation, the demoniac for bondage; grieve not, thou art born for a divine state." These words again are meant not for Arjuna alone, but for every seeker after truth who goes to the *Gîtâ* for light. How strengthening it must be for the immature struggler on the Path of Light to be told at the very beginning, and by no less a person than the Lord Himself, that he is born of divine qualities and is bound to reach the divine state!

It is however towards the end of this celestial song that Sri Krishna's heart melts in sympathy and kindness, and He draws the disciple nearer and nearer to Him by words that eternally soothe and refresh, words that assure the realization by the disciple of divine beatitude. Sri Krishna says, "Fixing thy mind on Me, thou shalt, by My grace, overcome all obstacles . . . . . , The Lord dwells in the hearts of all beings, causing all beings, by His Mâyâ, to revolve; as if mounted on a machine. Take refuge in Him with all thy heart; by His grace shalt thou attain supreme peace and the eternal abode."

"Thus has wisdom, more profound than all profundities, been declared to thee by Me," says the Lord, reminding the disciple that he has been a highly

privileged hearer of the greatest mystic truths. Again and again is he told how he is a beloved of God: "Hear thou again My supreme word, the profoundest of all; because thou art dearly beloved of Me, therefore will I speak what is good to thee. Occupy thy mind with Me, be devoted to Me, sacrifice to Me, bow down to Me. Thou shalt reach Myself; truly do I promise unto thee, for thou art dear to Me."

And here are words which haunt us in moments of darkness and give us the power to peep into light and get glimpses of the luminous Beyond: "Relinquishing all Dharmas take refuge in Me alone; I will liberate thee from all sins; grieve not."

Spiritual aspirants are a holy community by themselves; they stand to gain by communicating their experiences to one another, by comparing notes, by constant companionship. But they have nothing in common with the worldly-minded. The Lord refers to this fact when He says, "This (the great Sâstra taught by Me) is never to be spoken by thee to one who is devoid of austerities, nor to one who does not render service, nor to one who cavils at Me." But of him who hands down the Sâstra to a fit person, the Lord says, "Among men there is none who does dearer service to Me; nor shall there be another on earth dearer to Me, than he."

Sri Krishna's solicitude for the welfare of His student is nowhere seen in greater degree than when, unlike an imperfect teacher who utters some truths and does not care whether his pupil has understood them or not, He asks Arjuna at the close of His discourse, in words full of deep affection, "Has this been heard by thee, O Pârtha, with an attentive mind? Has the delusion of thy ignorance been destroyed?"

Arjuna's reply to this question of the

Lord is as significant and awe-inspiring as the question itself. This warrior filled with an aggressive self-consciousness was, if anything, himself a lecturer to the Lord at the commencement of the episode leading to the exposition of the *Gītā*. After having been enabled, by his divine Charioteer, to have a look at the armies standing ready for battle, the warrior's heart was filled with an ignoble pity, and he began to lecture to the Omniscient Lord on the futility, the inadvisability and the horror of the impending fight. He even preached to the Lord on the 'evil due to the decay of families', tracing how the decay of a family, in consequence of the massacre on the battlefield, led to the death of immemorial religious rites, the preponderance of impiety, corruption of women, intermingling of castes, and the fall of ancestors, and finally he resolved that it would be far better for him to be slain without resistance. To this great fighter in the throes of an unworthy melancholy, the Lord said with a smile, and in quite a good-humoured manner, "Yet thou speakest words of wisdom." Arjuna who was thus prone to giving out an oration to the Lord Himself on the pros and cons of the situation he was in undergoes a thorough change before the Lord has finished His teaching. And to Sri Krishna's question as to whether he grasped the full import of His teaching, Arjuna just utters two lines by way of answer, "Destroyed is my delusion, and I have gained my memory through Thy grace. I am firm; my doubts are gone. I will do Thy word." He has passed through the fire of wisdom and has been purged of all that was mean, untrue, and ignoble in him. How forcefully do these few words of Arjuna, marvellous for their brevity and profound meaning, bring home to us the truth of the law of what is called 'poetic restraint', the law which

says that when the heart is full, and the soul is bathed in perfection, then is not the time for words, words, words! In fact it is said that when sages in supreme moments of intuition and understanding find themselves in at-onement with the Universal Existence they are unable even to speak out their joy.

The *Gītā* ends with a few observations of Sanjaya, the messenger who narrates to King Dhritarâshtra the happenings on the battlefield. And Sanjaya gives expression to what is the feeling of every devoted student of the *Gītā*, when he says, "Thus have I heard this wonderful dialogue between Vâsudeva and the high-souled Pârtha, causing my hair to stand on end . . . I have heard this supreme and most profound Yoga, direct from Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, Himself declaring it. As I remember and remember this wonderful and holy dialogue between Kesava and Arjuna, I rejoice again and again." Which one of us can study the *Gītā* and yet escape being thrilled even as Sanjaya was thrilled!

The very last verse of the *Gītā*, again an utterance of Sanjaya, reassures wavering minds and strengthens the faith of all aspirants. Sanjaya says, "Wherever is Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, wherever is Pârtha, the wielder of the bow, there are prosperity, victory, expansion, and sound policy; such is my conviction." The union of Krishna and the wielder of the bow is what is required. Krishna is everywhere, in our inmost hearts too, ever vigilant, ever responsive, ever solicitous; if spiritual realization is not yet an accomplished fact with us the fault is not Krishna's, but ours. The magnet of Krishna is always active. But the iron in us needs to be cleansed of the dirt covering it that it may be drawn by the magnet. The Universal Being is there for us to have a vision of Him

at any time. Only the Arjuna in us must be aroused. We must take the bow of resolution in our hands and fight our way through. The Lord is ever willing to open the door; we have but to knock.

Thus very profound and unchanging indeed is the appeal of the *Gītā* to the individual. To one who is a constant reader of this Celestial Song, it is a common experience to hear its still

small voice in odd moments and unexpected corners, sweetening dreary hours, strengthening the irresolute heart, offering solution to knotty problems, and never failing to give light. Hence the *Gītā* is regarded as the quintessence of all philosophy, as the nectar-like milk drawn from the cows known as the *Upanishads*, by the milkman Krishna who was induced by the calf Arjuna, for the lasting benefit of humanity for all ages.

## SAMKARACHARYA'S IDEA OF THE ABSOLUTE

BY DRUPAD S. DESAI, M.A., LL.B.

As with Hegel<sup>1</sup>, so with Samkara, we will try to set out, in what follows, his views on the problem of the nature of what is ultimately Real.

Here, however, the discussion pertaining to the nature of the Unity constituting the Absolute will have to be touched upon incidentally and just in the beginning of the summary we append below.

Samkarâchârya's views on the nature of ultimate Reality have been very succinctly summarized, and admirably expressed in one single line of that famous and oft-quoted verse<sup>2</sup> :—

श्रीकार्जेन प्रवक्ष्यामि यदुक्तं यं यं कीटिभिः ।

ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या जीवी ब्रह्मैव नापरः ॥

The ideas underlying the second line of the verse may be expanded as under<sup>3</sup> :—

<sup>1</sup> See my article on "Hegel's Idea of the Absolute" published in *Prabuddha Bharata*, April, 1936.

<sup>2</sup> The verse is traditionally attributed to Samkara himself, but in none of his works can it be traced out.

<sup>3</sup> In drawing out this summary, we have derived material assistance from M. N. Sircar's "The System of Vedantic Thought and Culture".

1. *Reality is one eternal homogeneous substance; neither a system nor a process.*

This, again, can be analyzed into the idea

- (i) That ultimate Reality is Being, Existence (in general),
- (ii) That it is eternal Being, not a process, and
- (iii) That it is One—no duality, no multiplicity.

Being alone is the fundamental concept in philosophy. We can think away anything and everything, but how can we think away *that we think away*? All constituents of our thinking, all forms of existence, presuppose Being. This is the pure universal Being, the Brahman of Samkara.

In this sense, again, it can never be negated; for even negation and opposition themselves imply "being". The pure Being with which philosophy starts, then, cannot lead to non-Being.

This universal Being, we know, is not an object of our immediate experience. For it is always a particular being that forms the subject matter of our immediate experience. There is

nothing like existence in general in our experience. But universal Being is existence in general.

Such a concept of Being means that it is eternal existence. This Being, therefore, cannot be identified with Becoming or a process. For "becoming" is not "complete being", it is only an attempt to attain the fullness of existence, whereas the idea of the universal Being, the Brahman, the Absolute, implies the perfection of existence. The conception of growth may be consistent with the conception of a finite being, but never with that of Reality.

Such Being, again, is Oneness. Duality or multiplicity cannot be conceived in it. It passes our understanding to think of the possibility of reconciling the co-existence of a plurality of the reals with the notion of Absolute Existence. Co-existence implies a plurality of existences, existing in such a way that every one is dependent upon another, implying mutual action and reaction. Can this system of the reals be regarded as the Absolute? Surely not. For, none of the related terms is the Absolute, as it has its significance only in so far as it is related to the other. Neither can the system be the Absolute, as it is always complex, and depends for its existence as a system mainly on the terms in relation. The Absolute, therefore, in contrast to this, must be an all-pervasive oneness. The hypothesis of a multiplicity of different and independent realities, as being the Absolute, is out of question altogether, and need not detain us any longer. As a matter of fact, we may conclude that in talking of the Absolute, the idea of "system" must be abandoned. A system must have parts. Either these parts will be identical with the system, or different from it. If they are to

be taken as identical, their individual existence becomes lost; if as different, it becomes difficult for us to conceive of any relation between them. In any case, the Absolute must be conceived of as being free from all kinds of differences.<sup>4</sup> It must be, in short, one eternal homogeneous substance.

## 2. Reality is Consciousness

The description of Reality, as outlined above, is a bare statement of fact. Its nature has yet to be further determined. For that, however, we have just to appeal to the inmost being of our own existence; for there alone may we be said to be aware of what Being exactly is.

In the inmost nature of ourself, we find that we cannot make any distinction between our Being and our Consciousness. Being is identical with Consciousness. To think of Being as ultimately Real, and yet as something quite different from Consciousness seems to be metaphysically untenable. Just as the concept of Being can never be thought away, so we can never think away Consciousness also. We may think away its objects and its states, but we can never think it away; for, in our very attempt to do so, it asserts its existence. Consciousness, therefore, is the most positive of facts, the datum of all other experiences. As such, it transcends all limits of space, time, and causality.

<sup>4</sup> The kinds of differences that the Vedānta recognizes in general are three:—**खगत्**, **सृज्जातीय**, **विज्जातीय**. A tree differentiated into its trunk, branches, leaves, flowers, fruits, etc., is the **खगत्** type of भेद. One tree, as being differentiated from the other of its kind,—e.g. a mango-tree as being differentiated from a nimb-tree—is the **सृज्जातीय** type of भेद. A tree, again, as being differentiated from a stone, say, is the **विज्जातीय** type of भेद. The Absolute, the Brahman, the **एकमेवाद्वितीयम्** must be free from all these sorts of differences, indeed.



This Consciousness must not be confused with *Self-Consciousness*. It is, rather simply, *Awareness*. To be self-conscious, on the other hand, means to be modified in a certain way. It would, therefore, imply a mode of "becoming" in the integrity of "being", which is contradictory to the very nature of "Being".

Now, "Brahman is Consciousness, as Awareness" does not imply that outside it something must exist as its object. It is only in the case of empirical cognition that we need subject and object. The analogy cannot be extended to the Absolute which knows itself without any process of knowing. Consciousness is absolute intelligence, self-luminous.

Psychological evidence is also brought forward to support this view of the identity of Being and Consciousness. All through the different states of waking, dreaming, dreamless sleep, swooning, and so on, the Self remains there as the *irreducible minimum* of Consciousness, a witness to all these. Unaffected, unaltered, it remains in its Purity, as the constant element there. Ultimate existence, therefore, may be identified with this Consciousness, not with Self-Consciousness. If we identify Reality with Self-Consciousness, it would lose its impersonal character and self-luminosity.

### 3. *Reality is Bliss*

Samkara did not lay his finger on this characteristic of Brahman as quite so firmly fixed as the other two already described.<sup>5</sup> Yet it is not difficult to understand how this characteristic has come to be read into the ultimately Real.

Being, ultimate existence, is the perfection of existence. Bliss also indicates the perfection of existence. To speak of Bliss as pleasure, and as depending upon an agreeable stimulus, is only a crude way of speaking, and cannot be accepted. The consciousness of Bliss is in proportion to the growth and expansion that we feel in the conscious being of ourselves. The concept of Being, therefore, may be identified with the concept of Bliss.

Thus Samkara maintains the oneness and unchangeableness of Being in which no modification, no transformation, is conceivable.

The nature of the Unity constituting the Absolute, as is apparent from the discussion that has preceded already so far, is *Identity*.

Besides Brahman, nothing else is Real. That is the meaning of the fact that the world is false. The world-process appears as Real because it appears on the background of something which is essentially Real.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. I, 1, 19 to III, 3, 13 of his commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtras*.

## DIEGO DE ESTELLA, A SPANISH MYSTIC

BY WOLFRAM H. KOCH

While pondering over the different religious truths and paths to the Divine the thought strikes a critical student again and again that one of the principal factors more or less common to all is

true devotion in some form or other, and that this devotion, rightly understood and practised without the exclusiveness generally found among the followers of the different religions,

might serve as a link for a better understanding between them all, widening and deepening their religious outlook as well as their conceptions of the Divine.

All the great religions of the world have taught devotion and self-surrender to the Divine; so on this point there could be no quarrel nor any fighting between them. But it is a great pity that, owing to a lack of deeper insight and some very human element in the devotee's love for the chosen ideal, the name and form given to that particular ideal came to be stressed more than the truth standing at the back of all the different names and forms of the Divine. At the same time, unbiased study of other scriptures has always been more or less discouraged by the followers of certain religions and, even when allowed, it was so rare and so shallow that for many people it had become almost an impossibility to realize the essential unity underlying all the different approaches to the Divine through love in almost all the great religions and systems.

The very human and sometimes even touching element in the devotee's heart, that makes him love the Divine form he has chosen more than any other, very often blinds his eyes to the truth that the Divine he is worshipping with his whole heart and being is one and eternally the same whatever name one may choose to give It, or whichever of Its manifold forms may be dearest to one's heart. So the devotee comes to stress more and more a certain limited aspect of the Highest Truth, forgetting Its eternal oneness hidden under the veil of manifold conceptions and forms. And this has brought about no end of fighting and quarrels and misunderstanding between the followers of the different religions of the world to the great detriment of true Religion, giving a handle to the destructive criticism and ridicule

of the out-and-out materialist and sceptic.

So the devotee should try to be as devoted as possible to the ideal he has chosen, but, at the same time, never lose sight of the fact that none can limit the Divine to a particular form or aspect, and that in doing so, he only brings in the idea of "I" and "mine" in a subtle form which is very harmful to spiritual growth. We may be devoted to the Divine in any form that appeals to us, but we should always understand that the Divine in all Its glory is infinitely more than we can conceive of, possessing infinite aspects and attributes and transcending them all. Limiting the Divine means a form of blasphemy, means bringing It down to our very human level, to the level of bias and prejudice and personal likes and dislikes.

And very often we find that the more a person stresses his chosen ideal outwardly, the less of real faith and devotion he has got in his heart of hearts. It is nothing more than one of the many forms of the outgoing tendencies of the mind and serves as a distraction preventing the devotee from reaching his goal.

What is the common factor in all true devotion? Certainly unconditional love for the Divine and perfect self-surrender to the Divine. And wherever we find this, we can be sure that the devotee will attain to his goal no matter what religion he follows.

True devotion means to have one's whole being, all one's feelings and thoughts centred in the Divine, giving one's whole mind to the Divine and renouncing the fleeting pleasures of the senses and the manifested world.

The true devotee never cares for the created so much as for the Divine out of Whom all this created in all its manifoldness has come into being, and longs for union or communion with That alone. This attitude is found in all true devo-

tees whether they belong to the East or the West. To them the Divine alone is the one thing to be desired, the one thing worth having and possessing, the only resting place in a world of shadowy pleasures and unceasing change and turmoil. Their whole heart is set on communion or union with Him, so that the world of phenomena comes to lose all its charm and attraction, merely serving as a signpost to the Divine, as a reminder of Him Who stands at the back of it all and transcends it.

True devotion is practising the presence of the Divine at all hours, connecting all one's thoughts, feelings, and actions with him, realizing oneself to be a humble instrument in the hands of God. The life of the Bhakta, no matter what religion he follows, is always a life of consecration and self-surrender.

The Spanish mystic and monk Fray Diego de Estella from whose teachings some quotations are given below, was a soul of great intensity of faith and a great lover of God Whom he worshipped in the form of Christ. In his writings many passages of universal interest and great beauty can be found where his thought rises to the Divine in a spirit of perfect self-surrender and renunciation. As in almost all Western mystics of his time many chapters of his works are spoilt by a certain narrowness and traces of fanaticism so often found in devotees of intense feeling following a more or less dualistic path without recognizing the background of the One. But the beauty and clarity of his language is so great that he is counted among the classics of the Golden Age of the Spanish tongue.

Diego de San Cristobal was born at Estella in the kingdom of Navarra in the year 1524. During his studies in the university of Salamanca he came to realize what he later on called 'the Vanity of the World' and this made him leave the world and all worldly pursuits

and give his life to the Divine. He became a monk in the monastery of San Francisco of Salamanca, henceforth taking the name of his birthplace. As a monk he came to be known as one of the foremost scholars and men of 16th century Spain, but his life in the monastery made him realize that even that formed part of 'the Vanity of the World' he wanted to renounce. So there were times and periods of great struggle and persecutions in his life. He died in the monastery of Salamanca on the 1st of August, 1578.

Diego de Estella not only wrote about the Love of God, but tried to put it into practice in his own life and made all his thoughts and talks centre round this Love of God and the utter vanity and transitoriness of the world. In this respect he was one of the true Bhaktas of the West, although he may be inferior to other great Western mystics like Eckhart, Suso, St. Francis, and St. John of the Cross. But in his intensity and one-pointedness of Divine Love, in his fervour to realize the Divine Union with his Beloved he certainly equalled them in his own way.

I shall first give some passages taken from his 'Meditations on the Love of God (*Meditaciones devotissimas del Amor de Dios*) of which, I think, no translation is available. It is a work of great beauty and depth of feeling in which, it is true, he repeats himself again and again in his desire to emphasize certain eternal truths, but which seems to be his only book in which he now and then tries to express in a way that may even be unintelligible to the general reader his own experiences of the unitive life of the mystic and of the transformation of the lover into his Beloved.

He says :—

"We are pilgrims in this world, and we journey towards Thee, O Lord, as to our own country, and to the true native

land of our souls, wherein we live and move and have our being."

"How is it possible that any creature capable of union with Thee should not go with all its strength towards Thee, Infinite Centre of infinite good, and hence of infinite attraction? What thing can detain a creature capable of reaching so great a Good?"

"A small thing in comparison with the desire of Thee is that of the prisoner and captive, who is in constant peril of death, for the arrival of a true friend by whose diligence he may escape so great an affliction and return to his country and native soil."

"Arise, O my soul, go deep within thyself and see whose thou art, examine closely and rigorously to whom thou belongest, for thou belongest to him whom thou lovest alone. Do not be a slave of the world, a prisoner of the flesh. Break the chains round thy neck, regain thy former freedom, breaking with the world in right earnest. For God expects thy service only if it is free and voluntary. Which is the more honourable state for thee, that of being a slave and prisoner of worldly vanity, or that of being the servant of God, service to whom means reigning?"

"When art Thou going to rend the veil letting me see Thy face, so that I might behold that inaccessible Light and never again leave Thy presence? The first thing that I shall gain by Thy presence is that I shall find myself, for, at present, I have lost myself, and this not only when I am offending Thee, but even when I am longing for Thee in the secret recesses of my heart."

"So great and rare is the power of love that I must be even as is the object of my love, and according to that at which I arrive by love. There is nought that joins or adheres in as lasting a fashion as love, which unites and joins us with the Beloved in such a way as

to transform the lover into the object of his love. Love is nought but a unitive and mutual virtue. As iron, when greatly heated in the forge, becomes fire, so my heart, as it burns, O my Lord, in Thy Divine and sacred fire, is wholly transformed into Thyself by love. It is deified and becomes as God. The iron, cold and dark, as it is, becomes transformed into fire, and grows soft, warm, bright and shining, with all the properties of fire, doing all its works and everything that is done by fire, since it can burn, shed light, and enkindle."

And again he says:—

"Would, O my God and Lord, that my soul might be so absorbed in the ocean of infinite love and goodness, that I might no longer be myself, but rather, by Divine participation a copy and an image of Thy supreme goodness and mercy. O that it might be given to my thoughts to turn to One only, and that the strength of them all might be employed in burning in reverence before Thy Divine Self. Then might I say with the Prophet: 'The thought of my heart is ever in Thy presence.'"

"My heart has burned with Thy Love, O my Lord, and this flame that is so great has quenched in me all the fire of evil concupiscence. For no fire will burn beside that sacred fire, wherefore I have no great concupiscence, but all is the pureness and cleanness of chastity. The fire from heaven has consumed and destroyed in me all other heat, and I am wholly changed, for the most potent force of love has destroyed me and changed me into nothing."

"If thou didst love thy God and Lord with great and true love, thou wouldst not have such anxious care for the outward things which so greatly disturb and distract thee. The more nearly our will attains to God, the farther it is withdrawn from our selves. We ought

therefore to keep it fixed and intent upon God that we should be forgetful of all that is here below, and transformed, converted, and raised up into God."

And somewhere else :—

"This passing of the lover into the thing that is loved is neither violent nor painful nor laborious nor enforced, but free and voluntary, sweet and of great delight. And so the will, that in this way is united through love with the thing it loves, can be by no act of violence withdrawn from it, but by its own free will alone."

"Tell me, thou miserable and puny soul, what thing canst thou desire which thou findest not far more completely in thy Lord? If wisdom and knowledge delight thee, He is most wise and most knowing ; if power and might, He is most powerful and mighty ; if thou wilt have glory and riches, both glory and riches in abundance are in His house ; if delights and pleasures, at His right hand are pleasures for evermore ; if fulness and abundance of desires, those that possess Him are intoxicated with the abundance of His house."

"Only in God shalt thou find quietness and rest and in no other thing whatsoever that is in the world. He alone is thy centre, and thy true and natural sphere ; outside Him thou shalt find no contentment, but in Him all good, all rest, and all glory."

And again he says that the remembrance of God gives us strength and the power to overcome worldly temptations and that it is the only thing we can hold on to so long as our little "I" cannot be got rid of :—

"As I cannot fly from myself nor wholly renounce myself, there is no better means for me than the remembrance of Thee, O Lord, so long as my wanderings here on earth have not come to an end. The thought of Thee brings

sweetness and strength, and the remembrance of Thee heals all my weakness."

"All Thy creatures and Thy whole creation tell me to love Thee and cherish Thee, and in each one of them I see the language of Thy goodness and might. But all things created teach me above all devotion to their Creator, and far more so than love for the created."

"The very moment I give part of my heart, and be it ever so small, to the world, I divide it between Thee and the world. But in telling us to love Thee with our whole heart and being, Thou givest us to understand that Thy Holy Love wants our whole undivided soul to be made its dwelling place."

Through Divine Love all our desires and passions may be given a higher turn, all our actions purified :—

"Wherever my treasure is, there is my heart, and wherever my love dwells, there are all my desires. He who loves Thee with his whole heart, will always be thinking of how to serve Thee, and will always be yearning to be with Thee."

And here is a point he stresses again and again in all his writings : We cannot give part of our heart to the world and its transitory pleasures and at the same time be real lovers of God :—

"The cunning and deceptive world wants me to divide my heart, giving half of it to Thee and the other half to it, so that I may love it as strongly as Thee. But this neither righteousness nor feeling allow as all has to be given to him who is its real owner. So why dost thou want to be lame on both feet? Why dost thou follow two paths at the same time, my heart?"

"How indrawn and free from the world Thou wishest our heart to be, O Lord. In silence Thou speakest to our soul as soon as the noisy clamourings of

our desires and lusts and all our passions are stilled."

In all these passages we find the eternal cry of the soul for its Beloved irrespective of creed and clime, the one theme common to all devotees of all ages. It is the soul's yearning for its eternal home, for union with its centre which can never be limited to any one of the institutional religions. It is the cry of the child for its mother, of the friend for his only friend, of the lover for his Beloved, and the anguish of separation.

Fray Diego de Estella's well-known "Treatise on the Vanity of the World" (*Tratado de la vanidad del mundo*) is more time-bound in spirit and does not contain such high flights of emotion and depths of religious feeling. It is a rather arid work, depicting the transitoriness and vanity of ordinary human pursuits and pleasures in which the Divine has no place. But even here we find many valuable thoughts and suggestions that have an abiding worth if we take the trouble of studying this work in spite of its dryness and sometimes wearisome repetitions of the same strains and notes.

Only a few quotations and short passages will be given, showing the reader the general character and trend of this work. The didactic tendency of the book seems to have prevented the author from taking any very high flights in the realm of thought, very often bringing him dangerously close to rigid dogmatism. Of his own spiritual experiences scarcely any trace can be found in its pages.

"If you want God to come to your soul and hear you when you call on Him, all love for the world must die in you, and your heart, freed from all earthly affection, must be raised to the invisible and heavenly things."

"To many it is given to make a be-

ginning, to few to achieve something, and to very few to attain to perfection. We either run after the pleasures of the flesh, or lose ourselves in self-glorification, or break down under the blows of adversity. Few are those who seek God only and renounce themselves. Perfection is a very rare thing, and conquering oneself is an arduous task."

"Fly from dangerous conversations. Even if the wall be not burnt by the flame of the candle that touches it, it is at least made ugly and blackened. Even if you do not begin to burn, your character will be darkened by bad conversation."

"It is almost impossible to be in a mill without some flour getting into one's clothes and sticking to them. Similarly, it is scarcely possible to hold much converse with women and yet lead a pure life. You cannot go near the fire without getting warm. So if you do not keep away from dangerous conversation, you will be defeated sooner or later. Few, indeed, are they who do not pay some tribute to this idol "Woman", either in youth or in old age, for small is the number of those that resolve to break with the world in right earnest. They are in no great hurry to lead a chaste life, but at the same time, they praise chastity. Their intentions are good, but they sadly lack prudence. It is necessary to live with great caution. Guard your senses, for they are the windows of your soul."

"If you are careless about guarding your senses, you will be defeated. Reason resists the enemies where they can be vanquished most easily. The less you see or hear of the things of the world, the smaller will be your concupiscence, and the less you will think of illicit things."

"The eyes, being the guides of the senses, sully the heart in no time if you do not turn your gaze inward. The

things sully that which is inside are taken from outside. It is difficult to see beautiful things without getting attached to them. In order to get rid of the hidden bonds and those that are manifest, turn your eyes inward and draw them away from outer things, and see that you are not idle, for idleness gives rise to evil thoughts. Deprive the fire of its wood, depriving yourself of wine and too much food, then concupiscence will not be kept burning in you."

"The greatest harm done to the soul by the love of the world is to separate it from God. Only this inordinate love for the world separates us from the Creator and ties us down to the created which we prefer to its Maker."

"While there is sun there is light and joy, and in his absence there is gloom and darkness. The worldly-minded dwell in night and in the shadow of death, for leaving God, they go to the region of the Evil One where there is nothing but darkness and gloom."

"Leave your friends and companions, your relations and neighbours that you may find Christ. Do not love to be known. Learn how to die. He who is fond of the company of the worldly-minded cannot remain pure and good for long. He who is not zealous in guarding his devotion and goes to find consolation in the company of his worldly friends, loses it soon. So long as the candle is left inside the lantern, its flame is in no danger, but when taken out, it can be killed by any wind. In your prayers you will be greatly disturbed by the many and various thoughts of the things you have seen and heard while looking outward. Outer affairs and worldly occupations darken the understanding, making it unfit to contemplate the things of God. Blessed is he who guards his heart and body against all wanderings and enters into himself."

"Learn to conquer yourself in every-

thing, and the Lord will give you the fulness of peace. Cut off your inordinate appetites, let go the vain desires and send away the greed and craving for this world, then you will live in peace and contentment. Your own passions are warring against you. And while you go on complaining against your enemies outside, you suffer the others to stay in your own house. He is a great master and lord who is able to conquer himself."

"The world is a wheel that goes on turning and turning, and turning it kills all its lovers. The worldly-minded shall never attain to peace in their heart. Love God, and you shall have life. Deny yourself, and you shall come to have peace."

"The more you love God, the less value you will set on the things of the world. The Lord does not want our hearts to be divided and parted, but He wants them whole. Give your whole mind to God. Then He will look after you."

"So long as you allow yourself to be distracted by the things of the world, you shall never find rest in your heart. Only when you dwell with yourself, shall your life become well ordered."

"Enter your innermost being and stab all your passions and worldly desires, then you will never have any complaint against anybody. And if you have been offended and wronged, turn against yourself and fight those inner enemies of yours, because it is they who make you disconsolate. Do not go on complaining against those who are outside, for they cannot harm you in any way if it is not your will to be harmed."

"In the hour of death you shall find how vain has been the time spent in trying to please men, and what a great profit might have been yours, had you used it in pleasing Christ."

"Show your festering sores to God

and do not hide them. The humble confession of your own faults purifies you of all your vices if made with a humble and contrite heart before God."

"If you want God to be your helper, call on Him after having come to know yourself, for without Him you cannot be freed, and He only helps those who know themselves."

"If those who are diseased in their bodies do not deserve to be treated with hatred but with compassion, how much less do those souls that are full of festering sores deserve to be abhorred."

"Come to know the danger that lurks not only in evil but also in what you take to be good. Greater harm is done to a Christian by the things that appear to be good than by those that are openly evil."

"You should not set your heart on anything belonging to this world, for it is all vanity and a great madness. Vile are the things that are in the world and not worthy to be approached. Do not let the world deceive you. Close your ears to what it says. Do not allow your eyes to feast upon its show, for it is very different from what it appears to be. Do not allow its melody to lull you to sleep, for it is a siren that wants to betray you with her song, robbing you of your soul. The honours and delights of this world are flowers that fade in no time.

"Driven by his inordinate appetites the worldly-minded goes to the battle of Death where he loses his life."

"What are all the honours, riches and delights of the world, if not fetters to bind and tie down the souls of careless men? It is necessary to be watchful and to live with great caution. We should be suspicious of everything that the world tries to offer us and accept with fear and misgiving all its honours and its prosperity, for everything it offers is an ambush."

"Just as lust darkens the understanding, clouds all judgment, and dulls reason, the purity of chastity disposes the soul in such a way as to make it fit to receive a clearer conception of God and capable to grasp the heavenly secrets. Chastity subjects sensuality to reason, thus rightly disposing the soul to communicate and hold converse with her Lover, Christ. The spiritual beauty of our soul is to be attributed far more to chastity than to anything else, for chastity brings harmony and proportion, subjecting the flesh to the spirit. It is only reasonable that chastity finds its delights in God, for out of love for Him it despises the pleasures of the flesh and carnal appetites. He who abhors these coarse and dulling pleasures shall enjoy true and spiritual delights. Blessed is the soul that serves her lover Christ in a pure and undefiled body. Fly from the pestilence of sensuality, so that your soul may be an honest and loyal spouse of Christ."

"The royal prophet David says: In my meditation the fire is kindled. In order to kindle the fire of Divine Love in our will and to get a clearer knowledge of God, meditation and contemplation are necessary. Between them there is no greater difference than that he who has meditation thinks of God with an effort and difficulty, whereas he who has contemplation, having practised more, has created the habit and now thinks of the same Lord with greater facility and sweetness. But contemplation belongs to the mind and is the way and means to attain to perfection, not perfection itself which consists in raising our will to God through Divine Union and Love."

"A single day of fervent service is worth more than 100 days of lukewarm and lazy service. Half-heartedness in the service of God thwarts its own purpose. It does not attain what it asks



for in prayer, it fights and struggles and never wins, and sowing it does not reap."

"Purify your heart of all worldly affections. Remove from it all love for worldly praise and the vain glory of this world. Wash your hands of all perverse actions, guard your lips against all superfluous words, your eyes against seeing vanities and your heart against all bad thoughts, then you will have it pure in the sight of God. You wash your hands and face many a time so as not to displease men, but much more should you clean your conscience of all vices and sins and your heart of all stains to please God, Who sees its hidden secrets. Guard your heart in every possible way. From the heart rise all bad thoughts, murder, adultery, false evidence, theft and all other evils. So it has to be guarded and watched very carefully as the source out of which rise a number of vices. There are many who know what they should do and what they should guard themselves against, but as they are not careful enough in watching their heart, they come back to their old vices on the slightest occasion. It is one thing to know the right medicine, and another to apply the medicine to one's illness. It is very difficult to guard the heart in such a manner that it is not dragged away by the sense-objects outside, for life is one great temptation. So we should live with great care and watchfulness and pray for Divine Grace."

"The friendship of the world is in most cases like the friendship of the crow. Those whom you take to be your friends are not so in reality. They are but lovers of themselves. They simulate interest and only want to find

themselves in you. Do not trust the world. Do not set any value on words nor the vain friendship of men and never believe that the world will give you a better treatment than it gave to its Creator. O Vanity of vanities, to make much of these human friendships! They are toys for babies to play with and games for little boys and a vain and profitless occupation. Knowing that all worldly friendships are harmful for your spiritual progress, fly from them as from a manifest plague. And take all friendships below heaven to be things lent to you of which you shall be deprived the next day."

Many more passages could be quoted from the 'Vanity of the World', but these given above—scrappy and unconnected as they are, being taken from different chapters—will give the reader a general idea of the trend of this best known work of Fray Diego de Estella.

His sense of the evanescence of the world and all worldly things, of the instability of human relations and human love was very strong from his boyhood, and as the years rolled on, he came to realize more and more that the only sure foundation that could be relied upon at all times and under all circumstances was the Divine. As is the case with all Western Mystics, his melody is not rich in variations and different harmonies, but his was the true Bhakta's heart whose yearning cannot be satisfied with anything fleeting and transitory and who wants God and God alone.

Let us be grateful to him and give him a place in the company of the great devotees of all ages and climes who brought to humanity the eternal message of the Divine.

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## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

*Swami Vivekananda in Oakland, California* is concluded in this issue. . . . . In *Women's Education in India* we have examined the view-points of radical feminist movements of the day and have tried to show how the Indian women should be led along the lines of their national culture, and at the same time how they can be trained for the efficiency needed for the exigencies of the modern age. . . . Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, Curator of the Boston Museum, Indian Section, is too well known for any introduction. *Sri Ramakrishna and Religious Tolerance* is an address delivered by him on the occasion of the Sri Ramakrishna centenary celebrations, New York, March, 1936. . . . *Sri Ramakrishna and the modern world* is a summary of the speeches delivered by Sir S. Radhakrishnan as the President of the Parliament of Religions held last May in Bombay in connection with the Sri Ramakrishna birthday centenary celebrations there. Detailed report of the meeting is published elsewhere in this issue. . . . *Eastern Tolerance and Christianity* is a speech which Rev. Wendell Phillips, Rector of Trinity Church, New Rochelle, delivered on the occasion of Sri Ramakrishna centenary celebrations held last March in the New York Town Hall. He observed in it how India can give a good deal to Christianity. . . . *The Appeal of the Gita to the Individual* is from the pen of Mr. R. Ramakrishnan, a new contributor. . . . Mr. Drupad S. Desai's *Samkaracharya's Idea of the Absolute* may be interesting to our readers after his article on Hegel, pub-

lished in April last. . . . Mr. Wolfram H. Koch is a new contributor from Germany. He is a master of several languages and an earnest student of religion. He has given us these interesting teachings from the original works of *Diego De Estella, A Spanish Mystic*.

### SCIENCES OF LIFE POINT TO RELIGION

It is pretty late in the day to play the knight in behalf of a crass materialism and to renew the old fight against religion on rational grounds. Yet a few worthies in India seem to be engaged in the belated game. Science has become more humble today, and so far as its present position is concerned it has more than ceased to be hostile to religion. According to many leading scientists it tends further to confirm our faith in spiritual values, which we realize intuitively and which are incapable of being tested and verified by ordinary observation and experiment. Not very long ago it was generally supposed that science invariably turned its votaries into deliberate enemies of religion. And smattering of science does so even now. But at present we are just beginning to witness a reverse process whereby veteran scientists who grew up in a sceptical atmosphere and an agnostic tradition are veering round to an appreciation of things spiritual. The remarkable thing, however, in connection with this process of transformation is that the change has been occasioned and facilitated by patient and profound scientific investigations.

Prof. McDougall, F. R. S., confesses that such a change has come over him. In a recent publication of his he says

that a prolonged study of the sciences of life for more than forty years has brought about a slow transformation in his outlook on religion. He set out the grounds which led him from agnosticism to belief. First of all he was impressed by the fact that in spite of all the splendid achievements of science we still live surrounded on every hand by mysteries. Throughout his career he has also witnessed the mutation of scientific theories, which has helped him not dogmatize on the findings of science. But scientific caution and humility can never lead one along the way to religion. Does science say anything about spiritual values? With remarkable precision he places his finger on the two essential aspects of religion. Religion affirms man's spiritual nature and the supreme value of the spiritual. It also asserts "that it is the proper work of man to conquer the material aspects of the world and to bring them into subjection to the spirit." These imply two important things which science has so far obstinately denied, namely, that the spiritual ideals have causal efficacy and that "man in so far as his spiritual nature is developed can and does participate directly in the life of a realm of spirit infinitely surpassing in extent and power his own small spiritual spark." Does science still deny them? If not, does it afford any support for them?

As regards the causal efficacy of the spiritual, biology and psychology can deny them no longer. The mechanical theory of evolution has been given up on all hands, though there is no general agreement as to what is to be substituted in its place. Evolution is being generally explained in teleological terms, which can only mean that mind far from being a mere product or by-product of evolution "is, in some sense and manner, the essential active agent in evolution." When we come to psychology the in-

adequacy of the mechanical theory in explaining the adaptive behaviour of even the lower organisms becomes most manifest. Notwithstanding a few behaviourists it seems to be as dead as a door-nail. And it is amusing to see that while the physicists and chemists do not any longer adhere to strict mechanical explanation of phenomena, some reactionary biologists and psychologists who imbibed the theory from the former are clinging pathetically to a derelict vessel.

But what support do we get from them for the affirmation of spiritual participation? Even the untenable Darwinian or neo-Darwinian account of organic evolution postulates the struggle for life. This struggle for life among animals "is a series of activities which, though lowly and relatively simple, are yet allied to and are of the same fundamental nature as our own purposive actions." But every purposive activity points beyond itself to a larger purpose of which it is but a momentary and fragmentary expression. "Here we have one of the evidences of the view, often asserted, that all life is one." Again the logicity of human activity and the fact that the more logical is our activity the more successful it is in the world, point to a congruity between mind and the physical world, which can be explained as that "the laws of reason are primary and fundamental" and the "the physical world . . . is an expression of spirit." This particular point is, however, a double-edged weapon and too much must not be made of it. As a further indication of the pre-existence of logical power he cites the examples of precocious geniuses like Blaise Pascal and Mozart. "It is inconceivable", he says, "that this logical power thus mysteriously manifested is the product of the process of organic evolution, of the

mere struggle of living things to maintain life." Lastly it is in the realm of art that we find the spiritual kingdom expressing itself through man. All the richer instances of man's æsthetic powers go far beyond any biological utility. Artistic creations are symbolical. But no less so are the most sober descriptions of physical phenomena. All symbols imperfectly shadow to us spiritual reality. Again it is the experience of many that in the deeper moments of our existence as in contemplation we transcend the frontiers of our consciousness and partake of a universal spirit. Lastly he refers to the psychic phenomena from which many scientists have turned away in "fear disguised as contempt." His conclusion is: "The evidence supports the view that religion and science have ample scope to approach even nearer to the truth without essential conflicts and to achieve a fuller understanding of the spiritual aspect of reality without any sacrifice of the essentials of religion or any offence against the most rigid canons of scientific reasoning."

Non-recognition of the spiritual nature of man reduces all talks about social, political, economic, and moral reform to utter bunkum. And when determinists like Bertrand Russell advise a stoical bearing in a determinist world and yet preach "nudism, free-love, and the general principle of doing as you please" we can only enjoy an amusing bathos.

### RAMAKRISHNA AND RELIGIOUS TOLERATION

A comparison has been instituted between Ramakrishna and Asoka, Akbar, Darasheikh and others as regards their attitude to religion. To utter all the above names together is not only to miss the speciality of Ramakrishna but also to lose sight of some

very patent facts of history. There is no special point in recalling names like Asoka in this connection as no comparison between rulers is being set up. Religious toleration has been observed in India from time immemorial. The synthetic basis of Indo-Aryan civilization was evolved early in the Vedic times. Since that time it has proceeded by appreciating, assimilating, and absorbing ever newer phases of thought and culture. Doubtless this attitude of toleration formed an essential element in the greatness of Asoka. But it does not specially mark him out from numberless others, rulers and non-rulers, who preached and practised such an attitude.

The case of Akbar is altogether different. We generally have an impression that he was very catholic and respectful in his attitude towards all religions. Without doubt he leaned towards Hinduism and showed favour to the followers of some other faiths, but he developed a very peculiar outlook on the religion into which he was born late in life. To be definite he abjured Islam and passed a stream of regulations which amounted to a galling persecution of that faith. Some consider it to be the greatest blot in his career—his failure to live up to his much-vaunted catholicity. Beside he formulated a sort of Esperanto religion, adhesion to which required the solemn abjuration of Islam. This is neither universalism nor catholicism. The proclivities of Dara towards Hinduism and Sufism have drawn so much notice because of quite extraneous reasons. Anyway it cannot be considered as something exceptional in India, barring the consideration of Moslem rulers.

The case with Ramakrishna was radically different. His was no mere toleration of, or reverence for, other faiths, but full acceptance of them. It

was no cheap eclecticism. Further his universal vision was born of something deeper than mere intellectual discernment of the points of similarity among the different faiths. His universal spirit could not recognize the contradictions among the apparently conflicting paths of mystic realization and the different spiritual goals. He tested them one by one by the touchstone of life and realized their truth. Not only were the different paths efficacious but also the different goals of the different philosophies were equally true inasmuch as they represented the divergent aspects of the same Reality just as the variant pictures of a landscape snapshotted from different view-points reveal the same view. This synthetic vision was, then, something which was the very part and parcel of his being—a living truth felt in the deep recess of the being and not an intellectual acquisition. He did not, therefore, use a pruning knife to shear off the special features of the different outlooks but accepted them all in their totality. Here is then something unique which was never before witnessed in history. It constitutes by far one of the most distinct and important contributions of Ramakrishna to world-history.

### THE CINEMA-DOPE

As we write leave for introduction of a private bill in the Assembly restricting to some extent youngsters from attending picture-houses has been obtained, and the proposed measure is awaiting its fate in the open chamber. This awakening to a sense of the harm that certain types of pictures are causing in India is none too early. The evil of the cinema has already assumed sinister proportions in some of the front-rank countries in the West. It is evident from current literature that it is causing deep anxiety in certain

quarters, and a good deal of attention is being paid as to how this menace can be checkmated. But the evil that the ribald pictures are giving rise to in those countries is far too little compared with the injury that is being done in India. Quite apart from the fact that certain important differences in conditions which tend to set off some of the maleficent influences of the screen in the West, the advanced occidental countries have solved at least some of the pressing social, economic, and political problems which still stare at us threateningly. We do not say that they have achieved anything like finality in any sphere. But we do affirm that they have travelled a good deal further on certain paths which we are yet to traverse. Even so the cinema has disturbed their equanimity. How much more serious, then, is the evil in India?

It has been said that the Russians made the Revolution deprived of their vodka in war-time. And some gloomily envisage the violent tornadoes that will sweep over Europe when the nightly drug from Hollywood would cease. The picture is evidently overdrawn. But there is no denying the truth that the cheap nocturnal thrills are greatly retarding upheavals by blanketing mass discontent. In India cheap amusements are increasingly and effectively diverting national energies into fruitless channels while vexed questions are importunately banging on the door for solution. We know to what extent our youths are running mad after mere frivolities. We do not here refer to what we consider in the present context the lesser evils of youngsters deducing obnoxious values from the screen. We are only alluding to the general levity of outlook that is daily taking possession of the younger generations who instinctively try to fight shy of the hard battles of life. No body grudges them

a little innocent amusement. While the country does not provide institutions enough to build up a stern and sturdy manhood the evil outgrowths of a mechanical civilization are spreading ruin among our men and boys. The Roman Emperors used to avert revolutions by distributing corn among the rabble and by delighting them with fights in the colosseum. The twentieth

century Indian multitude is being held down by shadows. Let us remember that we are just now living on the capital of our moral and religious tradition. It is bound to expire soon. The future does not at least look rosy. Negative measures are but palliatives. Are there men enough to sense the danger and provide something positive?

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**DHARMA AND SOCIETY.** By Gualtherus H. Mess, M.A. (Cantab), LL.D. (Leyden). Published by N. V. Servire.—*The Hague, Luzac & Co., 46, Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1.* Pp. 206. Price paper 9/6s. net. cloth 12/6s. net.

At the outset the reviewer hastens to compliment the author on the rare sobriety and insight which he has displayed in the work under review. It is not always that a foreigner can be accused of such deep understanding of the ideal and practices of the Hindu Society. It is pleasant to turn to this work by a low Deutsch from the pretentious volumes infected with vitiated views of Indian 'eigenart' and 'Weltanschauung' with which a few high Deutsch scholars are inflicting the public in this fourth decade of the twentieth century. The present work undertakes to study the concept of Dharma as the fundamental motive force in the life of man as a social being from the point of view of the Hindu Society. The author analyzes the different contents of the term Dharma as it is found in Hindu thought, compares it with similar conceptions in other cultures and comes to the conclusion that fundamentally it is of a mystical nature: "It is *a priori* knowledge, and by its very nature it cannot be defined." As such it may be deemed a fit subject for epistemology. He, however, tries to convey some idea of it by saying that it "is the underlying motive principle in the social evolution of humanity towards the manifestation and demonstration of the soul, or in other words, of the basic oneness of mankind". Two aspects of Dharma are distinguished. The first aspect is expressed in the theory of Varna, while the second aspect is applied to social-organization.

Varna is translated as 'natural class.' While racial, cultural, professional, symbolical and occult conceptions are to be found in the theory of Varna, the cultural connotation takes precedence over all. The norms of the ideal Varna are autonomous. When, however, "the Brahmanas posited them and they were sanctioned to some extent by the rulers, the norms became heteronomous norms of class and caste, or norms of convention and common law." While Varna represents the ideal state, "caste represents historical and actual social conditions in India and elsewhere." The different factors which went to give rise to this social phenomenon are carefully disentangled. Caste in its present state is an evil. But he points out that throughout the long course of Indian history 'periods of life' have alternated with 'periods of form', that is to say, whenever social crystallization and caste separatism took acute forms there arose as a reaction great teachers who tended to restore the social equilibrium by the promulgation of Dharma in its first aspect. In his opinion mystics were the greatest reformers. He traces the various social evils to their "sensible and excusable origin". Caste is not condemned in a hasty and outright manner: "Caste was not without its advantages in some period of history. . . . It will not do to condemn caste system *a priori* as something anti-social. Caste has more than served its purpose in history." He is also not one who detects the mote in the neighbour's eye and forgets the beam in his own. "In the West," says he, "the social mind is obsessed by the idea of economical power and in India by the idea of the caste power."

Doctrinaire critics will find many of his opinions unpalatable. He is no believer in the shibboleths of equality in the social sense. To him Varna represents the ideal norms of the human society. Varna does not admit social uniformity, though it does stress spiritual equality. A false and illogical sense of equality has been responsible for the tendency to "weave all pieces on the same loom" and to promulgate a uniform legal code which holds children, idiots, and the morally weak equally responsible for their actions. He has no illusion about progress. Rather he seems to adhere to the almost Rousseauian belief that civilization is a progressive deterioration from an idyllic state from the social and spiritual point of view. Says he: "If it seems that the 'scientific' knowledge of man has been increasing, periodically but steadily, it also appears as if the general spirituality and sociality of man has slowly decreased, in spite of the periods of renaissance and revival." He refers also to the present ills not only of India but also of the whole world to a mixture of Varnas—to the non-correspondence of Varna with class or caste. Most of the upheavals, trouble and revolutionary outbursts of the modern era are an unconscious attempt to translate the ideal norms of Varna into actuality. "Fascism and National Socialism may perhaps be understood to be in essence movements and endeavours of the ruling and regulating Varna to make an end of 'mixture of Varnas' as regards matters of government." We cannot say if such oversimplification is possible. Anyway, he hastens to add lest he be misunderstood that the new world must come of itself by the way of the social mind, and all efforts to bring it about by force are unnatural (i.e. against the theory of Varna) and bound to bring much social suffering and to entail much waste of energy. As an instance of how the theory of Varna may be helpful in the solution of some baffling social problems he cites the vexed question of birth-control. "Sexual self-control and abstinence," he remarks, "may be seen to be the rule for the Brahmana, and the use of contraceptives may be regarded as helpful to peoples of the lowest Varna. Both courses are socially useful if followed by the right person."

For impatient reformers he has a word of caution. First of all the inner division of modern man has to be remedied. When that will be on the way to accomplishment, the outer division of society will be remedied as

a matter of course. "Forms must not be changed before the indwelling life has changed. The social mind is all important. The social leaders must work on and by the social mind." According to him, "no serious student of caste will propagate" the abolition of caste. How, then, to get rid of the evil? "The theory and ideal of Châturvarnya have to come forward again in the consciousness of the people, not as the model on which to remould the caste system by legislation, but as the fundamental theory of the composition of society. Public opinion will do the rest—and the problems of caste will solve themselves and the new classes will emerge from the crumbling remains of the old castes. The ideal Châturvarnya will serve as a beacon during this process which may be a long one."

We do not, however, at all minimize the worth of this extremely valuable publication which deserves the attention of all serious students of society, when we say that in a place or two his usual caution seems to have forsaken him. In rightly emphasizing the fact that the Hindu Society prescribes different standards of Dharma for different classes of people and stages of life he has evidently overdone the point by asserting that "the Hindu recognizes no universal ethical standard." As a matter of fact; he does. As Prof. Winternitz says "... the Indian law-books, when stating the laws for the different castes, generally add also a list of moral duties which are incumbent on all castes. Thus we read: 'Not injuring living beings (Ahimsâ), truthfulness, not stealing, purity, and control of the sense-organs. Manu has declared to be the summary of the law for all castes. (Manu 10,63)." (See *Prabuddha Bharata*, February, 1936, p. 169). But this has arisen out of the author's endeavour to demonstrate the far more sober outlook of the Hindu ethics and law as opposed to the Utopian and impracticable ethics of the West, derived from Christianity, which seeks to bind all by the same rules of law and morality. Again he appears to have a feeling that Dharma and Âtman are antagonistic social principles and that dynamic Dharma displaced static Âtman as a social force in Hindu Society. But there is no such contrast. Correctly speaking Âtman is no social ideal directly, though it is the ultimate goal of all men. It is through Dharma that one is gradually led to the realization of Âtman which transcends Dharma. As moral and spiritual life pre-

supposes Dharma, even so Dharma presupposes Ātman. And it is in the realization of Ātman that the almost inexplicable and mystic nature of Dharma in its 'first aspect,' to which the author refers, is to be discovered.

#### BENGALI

**ADISUR O BHATTANARAYAN.** By Kshitindra Nath Tagore. *Published by Brajendra Nath Chatterjee, 55, Upper Chitpore Road, Calcutta. Pp. XXXII+229+80. Price Rs.2.*

The tradition that a King named Adisura ruled in Bengal prior to the Palas and that he brought five orthodox and learned Brahmins to Bengal for the performance of certain important ceremonies is schoolboy knowledge. Historians, however, have not always been agreed upon the authenticity of the tradition. It was the late Mahāmahopādhyāya Pandit Haraprasad Shastri who first pointed out that the story of importation was neither false nor foolish. In the present work documented with a vast amount of well-attested facts gathered from a large number of sources the author

has ably demonstrated that Adisura was a real King who imported the five Brahmins namely, Bhattacharayan, Sriharsha, Daksha, Chhandar, and Vedagarbha into Bengal. He has discussed almost all the available sources, genealogical tables, ancient literary works, and epigraphical records and subjected them to an impartial historical scrutiny. Those who have argued that they can prove the existence of Brahmins in Bengal from time immemorial have, it has been shown, completely missed the mark. For the importation was due not to any dearth of Brahmins in Bengal but to a want of orthodox Brahmins competent to perform a difficult Yajna. The author has also traced the genesis of the Radhi and Barendra divisions in the Hindu Society of Bengal. While there will be obvious difficulties in accepting the date which the author assigns to Adisur (second quarter of the 9th century A.C.) we have not the least doubt that he has made a distinct contribution to the history of Bengal. The long list of authorities and authoritative extracts appended at the end of the book has considerably enhanced the utility of the work as a whole.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### SRI RAMAKRISHNA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

#### LONDON MEETING

The chief meeting in connection with the Ramakrishna Centenary Celebration in England was held on Friday night (March 27) at the headquarters of the Theosophical Society in Gloucester Place. Sir Francis Younghusband was in the chair.

In the course of his message, the Marquis of Zetland wrote to Swami Avyaktananda asking him to forgive his delay in replying to his letter owing to great pressure upon his time during the past week or two. Lord Zetland added, "I am interested in what you tell me of the arrangements which you have made for celebrating the Centenary of the birth of Sri Ramakrishna in this country. I carry with me very pleasant recollections of my visit to the Headquarters of the Ramkrishna Mission at Belur Math when I was in Bengal, and I shall be glad if you will convey to the meeting to be held on

the 27th of this month my good wishes. I trust that the philanthropic work of the Mission in India continues to make progress."

Mr. C. F. Andrews could not attend the meeting as his duties at Cambridge prevented him from taking part in the Celebrations. However, Mr. Andrews assured Swami Avyaktananda of his admiration for the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Mission which was very deep indeed. He had often worked with its members in relief work during times of flood or cholera or scarcity bordering on famine. Mr. Andrews was convinced that they had always rendered devoted and loving service to the poor. In his message, Mr. Andrews added: "I have also visited the Ramkrishna Mission in America, where it has carried a spiritual message into the heart of an overburdened world and civilization where untoward things have grown too strong for the silent working of God's spirit in man. Their members have shown an unselfishness and love for humanity which has won my heart."



Mr. Kanti Ghose, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Centenary Committee, read one more message received on the occasion. It came from the President of the Ramkrishna Mission in India.

Sir Francis Younghusband recalled how, when he was a young man in India, Sri Ramakrishna was living near Calcutta but that he had never had the good fortune of meeting him face to face. But he knew of one person at least who had seen the Master and that was the late Maharanee of Cooch-Behar. The Maharanee had told Sir Francis that she was present at the first meeting of Sri Ramakrishna with her father, the great reformer, Keshub Chunder Sen. Although she was too young at that time to react to the spiritual force of the Master, she had held Ramakrishna in great reverence, and what a close bond of mutual love existed between those two great souls! Sir Francis observed that the Master's message of "As Many Faiths, So Many Paths" was the greatest of all messages that they had received from the East during the last century. The speaker therefore laid emphasis on the peculiar character of the message in that it did not advocate mere tolerance but that it insisted on the acceptance of the tenets of other faiths in their entirety, and, he felt, Sri Ramakrishna, through his spiritual practices, had proved that all religious paths, if sincerely followed, led in their ultimate consummation to the identical realization. That was a message which was destined to do a great deal of good to the modern world.

Mrs. Edith Hunter, Secretary of the Friends of India Society, in an interesting speech dwelt on the realization of Sri Ramakrishna and his message to the world. She observed that the problems of the modern world would automatically be solved if they would only follow the teachings of the great Master.

The Message of the sage as interpreted by his great disciple Vivekananda had this peculiarity that it offered a solution on the spiritual plane by advocating the worship of the divinity in man. That, Mrs. Hunter felt, was the only remedy for the fever-stricken world at the present moment.

Mrs. Hunter was followed by Dr. Har Dayal. He traced the trend of modern European civilization from the days of the Renaissance and Reformation which had culminated in individualism in its most pernicious form, the result of which could be seen, he said, in the unstable

condition of Europe at the present moment. Dr. Har Dayal added, it was there with its hedonism, with its love of money and power. "But," the speaker declared, "Sri Ramakrishna stood out against all these. He insisted on doing away with 'Ahankār,' before one could hope to attain the ultimate bliss. His teachings are never more needed than in the present day when the whole world seems to be standing on the edge of a volcano, as it were. In his life Ramakrishna has proved how the most complete and blissful life can be led if one was only free from 'Ahankāra.'"

Swami Avyaktananda dwelt at length on the achievements of the Western civilization with its ideal of humanism. While paying tribute to the humanizing force of that civilization, Swamiji said the path led to a "cul de sac" and it was there that the light which Ramakrishna had lit would discover a new path which would lead the world to a state of blissfulness. He would not undervalue the greatness of the material civilization of the West but he was convinced that the time had come for its divinization by the acceptance of the spiritual ideals of the East. "The blending of the two ideals," Swamiji added, "will transform the world and it will be consummated in no distant future through the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna."

Before closing the meeting Sir Francis declared: "The West is now prepared to receive spiritual messages from the East and especially from Sri Ramakrishna who is not only the greatest spiritual genius in India of the present age, but also one of the greatest men of all times."

#### BOMBAY PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS

"Truth is one, though sages call it by various names." This profound teaching of the Hindu religion was fully expounded at the Parliament of Religions which opened its three day session at the Cowasji Jehangir Hall, Bombay, on Thursday evening, under the presidency of Sir S. Radhakrishnan. A unique gathering, representing all the great religions and faiths of the world, was present on the occasion. On the dais were placed paintings of the great religious teachers like Zoroaster, Ramakrishna, Lord Krishna, Christ, Lord Buddha and the star and crescent symbol of Islam. Among those present were the Thakore Saheb of Limbdi, Sir Lallubhai Samaldas, Sir Chunilal V. Mehta, Sir Hormusji Adenwalla, Sir Manu-

bhai Mehta, Sir Hormazdiar Dastur, Mr. K. Natarajan, Swami Vishwananda and Madame Sophia Wadia.

The proceedings began with a devotional song by Mrs. Freny Cama, followed by a prayer by Swami Vishwananda of the Ramakrishna Mission. Mr. F. J. Ginwala then read two messages from Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Rabindranath Tagore.

Mr. M. R. Jayakar, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in the course of his address, thanked the public for responding in such large numbers to the invitation issued by the Ramakrishna Centenary Committee. It was only one of the numerous functions held in honour of that great saint of modern India throughout the civilized world since February last. To a country like India, politically backward and financially poor, it was indeed a great consolation that the teachings of one of her foremost saints should have produced such a great and lasting impression throughout the world.

What was it that the world found so admirable in his teaching? Today the world was war weary. Only three days ago one of the greatest affronts to human civilization and freedom had been committed in Africa. To such a world the teachings of Ramakrishna brought solace. And the central part of his teaching was the old, old Hindu teaching "Truth is one, though sages call it by various names." Ramakrishna practised all the great religions of India. He realized more than any other modern saint that the truths of religion had to be lived and interpreted in man's daily life.

Sir S. Radhakrishnan then delivered his address on the essential aspects of the religious faiths of man.

Dastoor Noshervan Kaikobad then addressed the gathering on the teachings of Zoroastrianism. Zarathustra, the founder of the Zoroastrian religion, was the first to preach monotheism in Iran. It was he who developed the concept of God as Ahura Mazda, the all-powerful, all-knowing, all-pervading God. The essential part of his teaching was the emphasis it laid on the positive side of life. To him virtue did not consist in meditation, but in action. He wanted men to live and enjoy life and work for the service of their less fortunate fellows. According to him the highest service to God was the service to his creation. He enjoined his followers to lead a holy and righteous life, to be heroic and patriotic.

To be pure in thought, word and deed, to be righteous and helpful to others, to love the creatures of God, to strive to overcome evil by good, these were some of the cardinal teachings of Zoroaster. By following the path set by him men could reach perfection and immortality.

Referring to the cult of fire worship, the speaker observed that fire was only a symbol of divine purity. It was chosen to represent the divine, because of the qualities that brought it nearer to the divine.

Sir S. Radhakrishnan, while thanking Dastoor Kaikobad for his very interesting lecture, said that the belief seemed to exist that Hinduism was negative and other-worldly. That was, of course, a misunderstanding. Hinduism, as a matter of fact, never neglected the social aspect of religion. It was always recognized that wealth in the hands of a disciplined man was very desirable, and to be coveted. The service of man also had been well emphasized. It had been stated in more than one place that there was nothing higher than humanity, and that worship of man could be regarded as worship of God. One typical passage that bore out this statement was: "I do not want bliss or paradise. I want to be able to relieve the suffering of somebody in this world."

This concluded the day's sitting of the Parliament. It will reassemble at the C. J. Hall at 6-15 p.m. on Friday, when Sir S. Radhakrishnan will deliver his concluding address. Mr. M. R. Jayakar will preside at the sitting on Saturday, as Sir S. Radhakrishnan is sailing for Europe on that day. —*The Times of India, May 8, 1936.*

In the space of two hours, several speakers graphically explained the concepts of different religions and faiths to a large and representative gathering, at the resumed sitting of the Parliament of Religions, in the Sir Cowasji Jehangir Hall, Bombay, on Friday evening. It was, indeed, a rather difficult task, for the speakers were each allotted only ten minutes, and they were all congratulated by the President, Sir S. Radhakrishnan, upon the excellent spirit in which they approached their task.

Dr. Clifford Manshardt, speaking about Christianity, said he was not an orthodox Christian in the accepted sense of the word. He yielded to none in his appreciation of the humanitarian teachings of Jesus Christ. At the same time, he did not make a fetish of those teachings. Religion in India, to a

considerable extent, was a matter of ceremonies. Jesus had a noble ideal of goodness. The ideal did not relate to the meticulous performance of religious ceremonial; a good man was one who demonstrated his goodness by his deeds. Just as a tree was judged by its fruit, so a man's life spoke louder than his words.

Explaining the teachings of Islam, Dr. M. B. Rehman said that the Prophet Mahommed always emphasized that he was a mere human being like any one of them. The prophet was, perhaps, the first person who discovered that "Truth is one, sages call it by various names." It was not for the Muslims to ignore any of the great religious teachers who had long since done their work and retired from the world. Islam was a religion of service. The service of man and the good of humanity were the principal tenets of Islam. The great brotherhood, which was the ideal of Islam, could not be achieved without the utmost toleration, and that was preached by Al-Qur'an.

Mr. Adolph Myers then spoke about Judaism. He said Jews throughout the ages had always affirmed the unity of God. Like Truth, God was one; though sages called Him by different names. At the same time, the speaker felt that he would not be true to himself and his religion, if he were not to say that Judaism was different from other religions. It had always been different, and it would always be so. The reason was that it was inextricably bound up with the history of the Jewish people. The fundamental tenet of Judaism was Service—both of God and of humanity.

It was important to realize that, however much the great religions had in common, there would always be differences, and that they must learn to accept the differences in a spirit of mutual respect and toleration. If every one of them truly followed his own religion, the world would be a much better place. The Jewish religion stressed perhaps more than anything else the necessity of all the nations living together in peace and amity. If Judaism had any message for mankind in the modern world, it was that the liberty, equality and fraternity of nations in the family of nations were as important, as essential, as holy, as among the citizens of any one individual country, and that the soul of the individual could be saved only through the salvation of humanity at large.

After Mr. R. G. Pradhan had spoken about "spiritual idealism," Professor N. G. Damle expounded the teachings of Hinduism. They found today that they had enough religion to hate one another, but not love for one another. Matter was being controlled by mind, but the mind remained, to a very great extent, uncontrolled. It therefore required to be adequately controlled. Religions might differ in their philosophical doctrines, in their ritual, in their mythology; but they all agreed that there was a clear recognition of the reality and the supremacy of spiritual values. The ideal of Hinduism of a liberal and progressive type was to march ahead.

His Highness the Thakore Saheb of Limbdi suggested that the Parliament of Religions should find out one common religion for the whole of India to follow. Personally, he believed in and respected all religions. It was no use saying that "my religion is the best," for such an argument led to quarrels among themselves. God was one, and they had all to reach Him sooner or later.

Mr. Motichand Kapadia, speaking next about Jainism, stated that it was as old as any other system prevailing in India. Its tenets had been mentioned in the Vedas. Jainism had contributed materially towards general culture and human intelligence in various ways. Its ethical code of life, coupled with its highly disciplined routine, deserved careful consideration.

Mrs. Shirin Fozdar spoke about the message of Bahaism, stressing the necessity for bringing about unity between countries and unity between religions.

On the motion of Sir Jehangir Coyajee, a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Sir S. Radhakrishnan, after he had delivered his concluding speech. —*The Times of India*, May 9, 1936.

#### ALL-ORISSA RELIGIOUS CONFERENCE

The All-Orissa Religious Conference, Cuttack, began its first sitting on the 10th of April, the Good Friday, on the Municipal Grounds at Cuttack under the auspices of Sri Sri Ramakrishna Centenary of Cuttack. Swami Nirvedananda of Belur Math, Howrah, was in the chair. Under the banner of Sri Sri Ramakrishna the devotees of different religions gathered to speak. Babu Gopal Chandra Praharaj welcomed the audience and Sj. Harihar Mahapatra proposed the president, which was seconded by Sj. Krishna

Chandra Sen Gupta. There were two opening songs sung by Miss Pratima Ray Choudhury and Sriman Natagopal Das. The opening address of the President was a review of world forces in which we are at the present time situated and indicated how we should be able to get rid of shoals and dangers of the world into which it is plunging headlong owing to a thorough revolution in our social, moral, intellectual, and spiritual existence. The great and mighty thinkers, scientists and philosophers of the world like Eddington, James Jeans, Oliver Lodge, Romain Rolland etc. have declared that the intuitional path is also a correct path which when pursued by a devotee of pure mind and thought must lead to life and light abundant and help, see, feel, and touch God as Sri Ramkrishna actually did. After the President's opening address was over there were other speakers. Representatives of Christianity were led by Rev. F. Fellows, B.A., Principal, Christian Training College, Cuttack, of Dwaita Philosophy by Rai Saheb Prof. Artaballabh Mahanty, of Ahamediya Religion by Maulavi Zahur Hussin from Qadian (Punjab), of Islam by Dr. H. A. Zahir, H.M.B., of Jainism by Sriman Bihari Lal Parwar.

This Religious conference was held in a specially erected pavilion which could accommodate 2,000 people. The attendance was more than the accommodation and many had to stand for hours together. The audience was practically kept spell bound when the President spoke. The speakers showed perfect good temper and a spirit of tolerance while expounding their religions.

#### LAHORE

A memorial meeting was held in the Sanatan Dharma College Hall in connection with the Ramakrishna Centenary on February 24th, at 7 p.m. Principal P. N. Moulik was in the chair. Besides young men who were mostly University students, there were quite a number of Bengali gentlemen who came to join in the celebration.

Prof. S. N. Das Gupta was the first to pay his homage to the memory of the great saint. After a brief review of the life of Ramakrishna, he enunciated some of the

salient features of his teachings, which he considered to be a happy combination of the Gnâna, the Bhakti and the Karma systems of religion. He called it the crowning glory of a human being to have attained to the highest perfection of a Siddha, by dint of his own experiences and by practising all kinds of austerities.

The next speaker was Pt. Nirmal Chandra of the Dayal Singh College. He related some very beautiful and thrilling incidents of the life of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa bearing on the great achievements of that great saint of Bengal, and the great quest after God-realization which he pursued.

Pt. Vitasta Prasad Fida was the next to read his poem specially composed for the occasion. He narrated in the poem the chief characteristics of the Eastern civilization, and by referring to the saintly life of Paramahansa, he said that so long as India continued to produce men like Paramahansa, the West could not help seeking light and guidance from the East.

Prof. Hira Lal Chopra, M.A., next paid his homage at some length on the relationship between the Punjab and the late Ramakrishna, and reviewed the influence of a Punjabi saint on the saint of Bengal and that of the latter on Swami Rama Tirtha the saint of the Punjab, through Swami Vivekananda. He referred to the Chicago Conference of religions and the message conveyed to the West by Swami Vivekananda.

The proceedings were brought to a close by a few beautiful observations made by Principal Moulik, who made a brief survey of the various aspects of the great saint's life, and said that whatever divergent opinions the scientists might have about the great dynamic power which a saint came to possess through a training of the soul, the facts remained unaltered. He criticized some of the view-points presented by the different speakers and tried to bring about a reconciliation between them. He complimented the great saint on his marvellous achievements and felt sure his name and example would continue to serve as the beacon-light for all generations to come.

With a vote of thanks to the chair and the speakers of the evening the proceedings came to a close.

# RAMKRISHNA MISSION'S APPEAL

## KHULNA FAMINE

We have already informed the public that terrible famine conditions prevail, amongst other places, in the Khulna district of Bengal, the total number of people affected in the whole Province being over five millions. We have sent a batch of workers to organize relief in the Satkhira sub-division of that district. From the latest information to hand we learn that they, in consultation with the Government relief officers, have taken charge of two unions in the Shyamnagar Thana. This area is reported to be very badly affected and is besides difficult of access. In addition to the severe scarcity of food, there is a similar scarcity of water, particularly drinking water, which has led to an outbreak of cholera. Clothes also seem to be an urgent necessity.

Nawbeki has been fixed as our centre. The first task before our workers is inspection of the area, which will take a little longer time than usual because of the difficulty of communication. Still it is expected that the first regular distribution of rice will be made in three or four days.

## ARAKAN FLOOD

Readers of newspapers are also aware that a fearful flood has devastated extensive areas on the Arakan Coast of the Bay of Bengal, causing considerable damage to life and property. The reports that have so far appeared in the press give too little indication of the extent of damage done. Thousands of poor people are homeless and without sufficient food, particularly in the Kyaukpyu and Sandoway districts of Burma. Considering immediate help necessary, we have, in co-operation with our Rangoon branch, sent a batch of workers to Akyab for organizing relief.

Details of both activities will be published in due course. The success of the relief work will depend on a constant supply of funds by the generous public, to whom we earnestly appeal at this critical hour. Contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following addresses :—

- (1) The President, Ramkrishna Mission, Belur Math, Howrah.
- (2) The Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 4, Wellington Lane, Calcutta.

**SD. SWAMI VIRAJANANDA,**  
*Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission*  
*22nd May, 1936.*

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

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## MAN THE MAKER OF HIS DESTINY

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

There was a very powerful dynasty in Southern India. They made it a rule to take the horoscope of all the prominent men living from time to time, calculated from the time of their birth. In this way they got a record of leading facts predicted, and compared them afterwards with events as they happened. This was done for a thousand years until they found certain agreements; these were generalized and recorded and made into a huge book. The dynasty died out, but the family of astrologers lived and had the book in their possession. It seems possible that this is how astrology came into existence. Excessive attention to the minutiae of astrology is one of the superstitions which has hurt the Hindus very much.

I think the Greeks first took Astrology to India and took from the Hindus the science of Astronomy and carried it

back with them to Europe. Because in India you will find old altars made according to a certain geometrical plan, and certain things had to be done when the stars were in certain positions. Therefore I think the Greeks gave the Hindus Astrology, and the Hindus gave them Astronomy.

I have seen some astrologers who predicted wonderful things, but I have no reason to believe they predicted them only from the stars, or anything of the sort. In many cases it is simply mind-reading. Sometimes wonderful predictions are made, but in many cases it is arrant trash.

In London, a young man used to come to me and ask me : “What will become of me next year?” I asked him why he asked me so. “I have lost all my money and have become very, very poor.” Money is the only God

of many beings. Weak men, when they lose everything and feel themselves weak, try all sorts of uncanny methods of making money, and come to astrology and all these things. "It is the coward and the fool who says, 'This is fate' "—so says the Sanskrit proverb. But it is the strong man who stands up and says, "I will make my fate." It is people who are getting old who talk of fate. Young men generally do not come to astrology. We *may* be under planetary influence, but it should not matter much to us. Buddha says, "Those that get a living by calculation of the stars, by such art and other lying tricks, are to be avoided"; and he ought to know, because he was the greatest Hindu ever born. Let stars come, what harm is there? If a star disturbs my life, it would not be worth a cent. You will find that astrology and all these mystical things are generally signs of a weak mind; therefore as soon as they are becoming prominent in our minds we should see a physician, take good food, and rest.

If you can get an explanation of a phenomenon from within its nature, it is nonsense to look for an explanation from outside. If the world explains itself, it is nonsense to go outside for an explanation. Have you found any phenomena in the life of a man that you have ever seen which cannot be explained by the power of the man himself? So what is the use of going to the stars, or anything else in the world? My own Karma is sufficient explanation of my present state. So in the case of Jesus himself. We know that his father was only a carpenter. We need not go to anybody else to find an explanation of his power. He was the outcome of his own past, all of which was a preparation for that Jesus. Buddha goes back and back to animal bodies, and tells how he ulti-

mately became Buddha. So what is the use of going to stars for explanation? They may have a little influence, but it is our duty to ignore them rather than hearken to them and make ourselves nervous. This I lay down as the first essential in all I teach: anything that brings spiritual, mental or physical weakness, touch it not with the toes of your feet. Religion is the manifestation of the natural strength that is in man. A spring of infinite power is coiled up and is inside this little body, and that spring is spreading itself. And as it goes on spreading, body after body is found insufficient; it throws them off and takes higher bodies. This is the history of man, of religion, civilization, or progress. That giant Prometheus, which is bound, is getting himself unbound. It is always a manifestation of strength, and all these ideas such as astrology, although there may be a grain of truth in them, should be avoided.

There is an old story of an astrologer who came to a king and said, "You are going to die in six months." The king was frightened out of his wits, and was almost about to die then and there from fear. But his minister was a clever man and this man told the king that these astrologers were fools. The king would not believe him. So the minister saw no other way to make the king see that they were fools but to invite the astrologer to the palace again. There he asked him if his calculations were correct. The astrologer said that there could not be a mistake, but to satisfy him he went through the whole of the calculations again and then said that they were perfectly correct. The king's face became livid. The minister said to the astrologer, "And when do you think you will die?" "In twelve years," was the reply. The minister quickly drew his sword and separated the astrologer's head from the body and said to

the king, "Do you see this liar? He is dead this moment."

If you want your nation to live, keep away from all these things. The only test of good things is that they make us strong. Good is life, evil is death. These superstitious ideas are springing like mushrooms in your country and women wanting in logical analysis of things are ready to believe them. It is because women are striving for liberation, and women have not yet established themselves intellectually. One gets a few lines of poetry from the top of a novel and says she knows the whole of Browning. Another attends a course of three lectures and then thinks she knows everything in the world. The difficulty is that they are unable to throw off the natural superstition of women. They have a lot of money and some intellectual learning, but when they have passed through this transition stage and get on firm ground, they will be all right. But they are played upon by charlatans. Do not be sorry; I do not mean to hurt anyone, but I have to tell the truth. Don't you see how open you are to these things? Don't you see how sincere these women are, how that divinity latent in all never dies? It is only to know how to appeal to the Divine.

The more I live, the more I become convinced every day that every human being is divine. In no man or woman, however vile, does that divinity die. Only he or she does not know how to reach it, and is waiting for the Truth.

And wicked people are trying to deceive him or her with all sorts of fooleries. If one man cheats another for money, you say he is a fool and a blackguard. How much greater is the iniquity of one who wants to fool others spiritually! This is too bad. It is the one test, that truth must make you strong, and put you above superstition. The duty of the philosopher is to raise you above superstition. Even this world, this body and mind are superstitions; what infinite souls you are! And to be tricked by twinkling stars! It is a shameful condition. You are divinities; the twinkling stars owe their existence to you.

I was once travelling in the Himalayas and the long road stretched before us. We poor monks cannot get any one to carry us, so we had to make all the way on foot. There was an old man with us. The way goes up and down for hundreds of miles, and when that old monk saw what was before him, he said, "Oh, sir, how to cross it; I cannot walk any more; my chest will break." I said to him, "Look down at your feet." He did so, and I said, "The road that is under your feet is the road that you have passed over and is the same road that you see before you; it will soon be under your feet." The highest things are under your feet, because you are Divine Stars; all these things are under your feet. You can swallow the stars by the handful if you want; such is your real nature. Be strong, get beyond all superstitions and be free.

## THE EDUCATION OF THE MASSES IN INDIA

BY THE EDITOR

### I

Those who really feel for India and think of her problems cannot but be shocked at the appalling illiteracy that prevails among the masses of the

country. According to the last census report, about 23½ million out of nearly 353 million total population of India are literate, and in British India, about 19 million out of 271½ million inhabit-



ants are literate. Out of 170 million women in the country, only over four million may be described as barely literate. It goes to show that just over two per cent of the entire female population of the country is literate. In the current year we can compare notes with the percentages of illiterates in the different countries of the world as given in the table below: Egypt has 85.7; Canada, 5.1; U.S.A., 6.0; Mexico, 64.9; U.S.S.R., 47.7; Belgium, 7.5; Bulgaria, 39.7; Spain, 48.0; Esthonia, 10.9; France, 5.8; Greece, 43.8; Hungary, 13.0; Italy, 26.8; Latvia, 18.8; Lithuania, 32.7; Poland, 32.7; Portugal, 65.2; and India, 90.6. One-third of the world's illiterates are in India. India is the only country in the civilized world where such a lamentable percentage of illiteracy has been possible. The figures noted above are sufficient to prove why mass movements in India have met with failures to the utter disappointment of the nation as a whole. It is a strange irony of fate that the mass education in India is even today a dream to be realized in some remote future by the educators of the country!

The educational policy in India has always been indifferent to the educational needs of the masses of India. It has produced a system of education that has deliberately kept the vital interests of the masses in the background. It has created a wide, artificial gulf of difference between the masses and the classes of India. The classes have always looked down upon the masses with an air of superiority born of English education, the main object of which has up till now been to win lucrative posts and to shine in the learned professions. Dr. P. Guha-Thakurta while writing on mass education observed some time ago in the *Twentieth Century*: "A system of edu-

cation which had, for all practical purposes, ignored the 90 per cent of the country's people who live in rural areas and follow agricultural avocations, was foredoomed. There is perhaps no parallel in the educational history of any country where such a total disregard of the educational interests of the masses has been shown, as in India—with the inevitable result of a gradually widening cleavage between the large masses and an educated minority. This is admitted even by intelligent British observers. The *Glasgow Herald*, in a leading article, a few years ago, referring to India's 'intellectual unemployment' said: 'It should be obvious that in the case of a land like India, where the needs of the village population are paramount, a university system that directs men's minds away from and not towards the service of these needs, cannot be giving India what she most urgently requires'. The bankruptcy of the prevalent educational system in India is thus complete." It would be unfair to lay all the blame at the door of the modern system of education. Before the advent of English education and even after that priest-power, foreign invasions, and various social evils were no less responsible for the degradation of the masses in India. Swami Vivekananda remarked: "Our aristocratic ancestors went on treading the common masses of our country under foot, till they became helpless, till under this torment the poor, poor people nearly forgot that they were human beings. They have been compelled to be merely hewers of wood and drawers of water for centuries, so much so, that they are made to believe that they are born as slaves, born as hewers of wood and drawers of water. With all our boasted education of modern times, if anybody says a kind word for them, I

often find our men shrink at once from the duty of lifting them up, these poor down-trodden people. Not only so, but I also find that all sorts of most demoniacal and brutal arguments, culled from the crude ideas of hereditary transmission, and other such gibberish from the Western world, are brought forward in order to brutalize and tyrannize over the poor, all the more." As a result of their own sins, the classes have been the greater losers and find themselves now in a hopeless predicament. The upper classes must suck their own poison and keep the veins of the national life strong and active. The uneducated majority are waking now from their age-long slumber, and it is the bounden duty of the educated minority to devise plans under the existing conditions for the education and the elevation of the former.

## II

All eminent thinkers have pointed out the distinctive merits of the masses of India, which they have inherited from the ancient culture of the land. They are far more cultured, more hospitable, more kindly, and less violent in temperament. So, the education of the Indian masses must be different from that of the Western masses. The question presses for solution whether the Indian masses should develop their individuality along their traditional beliefs and practices, or whether they should eschew the Indian civilization as out of date. It is a knotty problem inasmuch as on it depends the future of the Indian nation. Sir John Woodroffe made a clear analysis of the question in his essay on "The Seed of Race". It is good for us to consider the plausibility of his views in this connection: "I would say that we should look primarily *not to the produced but to the producer,*

not to transient forms but to the lasting Racial Spirit moulded through the ages of which spirit they are the embodiment; not to past cultural forms, which may or may not be applicable to present needs, but to the Spirit of the Race which manifested in them. Thus the Indian Spirit may, in the 10th century, have produced new, or maintained inherited forms. True conservatism however is not necessarily bound up with the maintenance in the twentieth century of forms a thousand years old, but with the maintenance in its purity of the Racial Spirit which produced or adopted certain forms in the 10th century, and which will produce, if necessary, other new forms or modification of ancient forms of today. After all it is the general Spirit and Principle which counts. The strictly orthodox may be alarmed at this statement, but they may, in large part (that is as to essentials) rest assured. For if the ancient spirit is conserved, that is, if the Racial Sangskâra is maintained, such modification and even apparent novelty as are produced must be, from the nature of the case, in true relation and conformity with the Sangskâra out of which they have arisen. In other words an Indian soul can never for any length of time wander far from the essentials of its inherited civilization.

But what of the extreme Westernizer in theory and practice? Have we not here a breach with tradition and a new Karma? Will not this Karma generate a new Sangskâra? Certainly there is a breach and a new Karma but that it can generate a Sangskâra which can altogether overpower, in the general body, that accumulated in countless past ages I do not believe to be possible. This assumes of course that the present people continue as an independent racial unity and do not disappear

either through disease, intermingling with other stocks or, according to Hindu ideas, pass away upon the re-birth of Indian Souls in other bodies and of other Souls in Indian bodies. The persistence of racial characteristics and what is described as the 'call of the blood' is observed in even highly unfavourable surroundings. Temporarily, however, the Racial Sangskâra (though not lost) may be submerged. That is what has happened in some cases through Western influences in the India of today."

It is clear from the above considerations that in the work of elevating the masses of India, we need not cut off their age-long cultural moorings, their unschooled ideas of God and metaphysics, their religious rites and ceremonies, and their sound and simple habits. It would be a folly to preach before them materialistic ideas of the West and to inspire them with the ideals of various offshoots of economism and aggressive nationalism. The masses are imbued with the lofty ideas of life from their epic-stories, folk-plays, kirtan, kathakatâ, and similar other sources. So, it would be a difficult task for the so-called educated people to initiate them into a materialistic interpretation of life, nor would it be wise for them to do so even for the material progress of India.

It should be the main business of the national workers to help them in developing their lost individuality. It should be the prime duty of the upper classes to preach to them the gospel of equality and to love and treat them as equals.

### III

The necessity of popularizing the principle of free, universal education in the country is strongly felt by all earnest seekers after the welfare of the

Indian masses. There are so many things that stand in the way of realizing the principle to any appreciable degree. Firstly, there are no serious attempts to translate it into action. The village primary schools are handicapped for want of finance and trained teachers. Secondly, there is the abject poverty reigning among the agricultural masses, so much so that education has no charm for them. Thirdly, the primary education that is now prevalent in villages and small towns of India has no attractiveness because of its classroom routine and of its encroachment upon the time and leisure of the farmers' or wage-earners' children. Fourthly, there are very few night schools in villages and small towns that are really useful to the masses. Fifthly, what is most important of all is that primary schools are not organized on the principle of learning things in working hours. Sixthly, the last and not the least of all is that self-sacrificing and trained teachers are very rare among the people who are in the active field of spreading literacy among the masses.

Regarding the rural schools for universal popular education, Dr. P. Guha-Thakurta observes: "There are two distinct types of such schools, the Bombay type and the Punjab type. The range of both the types is, however, very limited; and it is doubtful if there can be any large popular demand for either of them in any comprehensive scheme of rural education on mass lines. Both types aim at imparting some amount of practical training in elementary agriculture, including learning how to handle agricultural machinery and look after cattle and farm. Particularly with the Punjab type of which more than 60 schools are in existence, theoretical instruction in the class room is supported by actual manual work in the rudimentary processes of small-scale

farming. But neither the Bombay nor the Punjab models, self-contained and circumscribed as they both are, can appeal to the large mass of rural population of the country. The Royal Commission on Agriculture found the Bombay type rather costly and more or less 'an artificial addition to the educational system and in no way a natural development of it'. As regards the Punjab type, although it has made some little headway in the province, its ultimate utility is practically negligible. The real need of the children of the cultivating or landholding class in rural areas is not the finding of a slightly better form of career in agriculture than is available at present, but of making a decidedly better living out of agriculture. So, even the elementary experience they may gain in model rural schools or farms is largely wasted on them, and therefore, lost to the Indian countryside as a whole." So, we see that these rural schools are manufacturing a handful of teachers and village accountants. Besides this, the inclusion of elementary agriculture only in the rural schools cannot meet so many other needs of mass education.

In towns and cities, the general masses of people may be a little more intelligent and informed, but the degrading forces in them are too suffocating for them to breathe a moral and religious atmosphere. The poor working in towns and cities have almost been out of touch with the culture of the land, and they are gradually being brutalized by the machine-dominated life and activities. So, unless the sober and educated section of the Indian public take seriously the problem of mass education, there is hardly any hope for them. The days are coming fast, when the public will have to take it for their own interests as the national

problems become more urgent than ever for their immediate solution.

The Government grants on education are too small and they are nothing compared with those in the advanced countries of the world. The public should come forward with sufficient funds to eradicate the evil of mass illiteracy. The finest educational institutions in the U.S.A. and some other prosperous countries of the world have been established on private charity and individual efforts. It is for the Indians to find out means for the spread of literacy in their country, without looking to the State institutions and State help.

#### IV

The well-being of the educated and upper classes lies in spreading literacy among the common people and in helping them to get their legitimate rights. Swami Vivekananda cried himself hoarse over the raising of the masses of India. He had some constructive and lofty ideas in his programme of mass education in India. He used to ask young and cultured people of India to go to villages with cameras, globes, maps, etc., with a view to giving the illiterate some information about Geography, History, Astronomy, and Indian culture. He advised them to teach the people in their vernaculars, to give them ideas so that they may open their eyes and see what is going on in the world around them. Education must be, according to him, given freely and it should go to their doors through bands of efficient and self-sacrificing preachers and workers. The motto which the great Swami wanted his countrymen to keep before them was, "Elevation of the masses without injuring their religion". He stressed also that the masses should at the same time be instructed in simple

words about the necessities of life and in trade, commerce, and agriculture. These things for the uplift of the masses require genuine sympathy for them and willingness for the real work among

the down-trodden, poor countrymen. Otherwise, no satisfactory results can be attained by drawing up schemes and passing resolutions in open meetings and councils.

## HINDUISM AND BUDDHISM\*

BY PROF. DR. HELMUTH VON GLASENAPP

The view of the world of Buddhism is a special form of the general Indian view. All the essential points of the latter are to be found in it: viz., the theory of the world law (law of the universe), the periodic creation of the world, its destruction, the ages, evolution of creatures, Karma, and emancipation. Exactly as in orthodox Hinduism the most different theoretical, metaphysical, and ethical teachings are mixed up with one another and are forms of expression of the same truth, suited to the necessities of the different kinds of men. Besides other differences (e.g. theism occurs only as a kind of under-current), the Anatta theory must be specially mentioned as the characteristic difference between Buddhism and Hinduism. The view that the self of a man is not imperishable, that it is destroyed and that a new individual is born under the influence of Karma, who is the heir to the good and bad deeds of the deceased, is found in the holy scriptures of the Brâhmanas (*Bṛihadâraṇyaka-Upanishad* 3, 2, 13). It occurs there, however, only as an isolated passage and the orthodox people have later on dropped it; all Brâhmanical systems teach the existence of immortal souls. Buddhism, on the other hand, has always represented, at least in theory, the view that "there is no self" and has made it the main

point of its theory of salvation. Buddhist writers consider their religion as superior to all others since it earnestly tries to train them up to "selflessness" in the highest sense.

These and other differences would not have made Buddhism an independent religion different from Hinduism, for in its astonishing all-comprehensive tolerance, Hinduism would have very well tolerated the existence of a sect with such philosophical views. What brought about the clear separation was something different. In the orthodox Hinduism of former times, with the greatest tolerance of metaphysical views, as could be easily proved, was combined an intolerance with regard to social matters, which increased in course of time.

Hinduism is called "Varnâshrama Dharma", the eternal law about castes and stages of life. Any offence committed against this social organization is an intolerable damage done to the moral structure of the world. The professional protectors of this sanctified institution are, however, the Brâhmanas, who claimed the front rank as compared with other castes, and this claim was very rarely contested. Buddha challenged this claim clearly and distinctly. For, since according to him perfection can be attained only by the moral behaviour of the individual,

\* Translated from the original German by Prof. K. Amrita Row, M.A.

by ascetic discipline and by understanding the four sacred truths, which had been revealed to him under the Bodhi tree, the Brâhmanical sacrificial system, which in the opinion of the priest could give only transitory heavenly bliss and not emancipation, appeared to him to be of doubtful value; animal sacrifices were naturally a horror to his compassionate heart. He also challenged the esoteric doctrines of the Brahmins arising out of animal sacrifices as propounded in the appendices to the *Vedas*, in the *Brâhmanas* and *Upanishads*. For, these doctrines as part of the eternal revelation of the *Veda* had to be communicated only to the men of the higher Aryan castes, who were found worthy of it by the Masters. Buddha taught the eternal doctrines, which ought to be available to every one, whose mind and heart were capable of receiving them. He has therefore bitterly criticized the "hawking of the secret doctrine" by the Brahmin priests. He has repeatedly emphasized the point that it is not the fact that a person belongs to a privileged class but only the spiritual and moral qualities that should entitle a person to progress on the path of emancipation.

Buddha was not the first, nor was he the last amongst the religious teachers of India, who raised a protest against the claims of the Brahmins. It was in his time that the resentment of the nobles of the warrior class was strongest against the pretensions of the priestly class. This is evident not only from the success of the other anti-Brâhmanical movements, such as Jainism, but also from the holy scriptures of the Brahmins themselves; it is related several times in the *Upanishads* how the Kshatriyas defeated and humiliated the Brahmins in the discussions about the nature of the absolute. While, however, the Brahmins succeeded in

accommodating themselves somehow or other to the wishes of the most of the original anti-Brâhmanical movements, Buddhism remained true to its principles and finally met with destruction in Hindustan; when Buddhism declined, it could not resist the rejuvenated Brâhmanism and became extinct in the land of its birth.

The refusal to acknowledge the claim of the Brahmins that they were the sole repositories of the supernatural revelation had far-reaching consequences for Buddhism. For, according as it developed to a world religion from the teachings of a small order of monks, there increased the necessity to offer to its own followers what Brâhmanism gave to its own. There arose a sacred literature, which in the eyes of the devout Buddhists was of no less universal validity than the holy *Vedas*, a phantastic cosmology and mythology which was in no way inferior to that of the Brahmins, and finally a vast system of worship and incantations which could compete with that of the Brahmins in every respect. Indeed, even a regular priesthood had finally developed in later Buddhism. This priesthood, however, differed essentially from that of Hinduism, inasmuch as it was not hereditary, but the priests were supplemented from a number of ordained monks; all the same it exercised no less power in the church and the state. The position of the Lama in Tibet is in no way inferior to that of the Brâhmanas. There is a further similarity to the Brahmin priesthood, since monks are permitted to marry and thus a hereditary priesthood has developed, as for example amongst the Vajrâcâryas of Nepal, the red caps of the Himalayan territory or amongst the descendants of Shinran Shonin as princely abbots of the Japanese Shin Sect. Thus, in some countries the later development of Buddhism

has led to the paradoxical position that an originally anti-clerical religion finally created a priesthood, which like the Brahmins, against whom there was always a campaign, claimed for itself a privileged position in society, since the members of this class have a knowledge of the holy ceremonies, which gives them supernatural powers.

The principles, on which the claims of the Brâhmanical caste are based are of fundamental importance for the attitude of Buddha towards the caste system. The institution of caste, as it obtains even today in Brâhmanism, is to him not an essential and decisive factor within the religio-social organization, but according to him it is an institution of the society, which has nothing to do with the path of salvation preached by him. It lies as it were on a different plane from that of the invisible sphere of his community. The caste is of divine origin, as the famous Purusha Sukta of the *Rig Veda* 10,90 says : The Brâhmanas were born from the mouth, the Kshatriyas from the arms, the Vaishyas from the thighs and the Shudras from the feet of the divine Purusha, the original source of the universe. But, as mentioned in *Digha-nikâya* and as the later dogmatists have explained, it is a human invention, which arose out of the necessities of the times in the third Asankhyeya period of our age, when men had become wicked and had to work to earn their daily bread. From the fact that Buddha does not attribute divine origin to the caste system, many scholars have hastily inferred that Buddha has condemned caste system. Far from it. Never and nowhere did Buddha set himself up as a social reformer. He did not wish to create the caste system as an institution of society, and so proclaimed the equality of all men. What he did, was something quite different; he decided that

differences in caste should not stand in the way of people being admitted into Buddhism as laymen or monks. We thus find in the circle of his first disciples, besides people belonging to the higher strata of society, who seem to have formed the majority of his followers, also people from the lower castes (like Sunita, the Scavenger). That persons of various castes could become followers of a holy person or members of a religious order with equal privileges is not by itself a specifically Buddhist conception. Amongst the different sects of the Hindus of the ancient and modern times similar things are to be found. The main difference lies in another thing; for Brâhmanism, caste-system plays such an important rôle in life that it considers caste distinction does not exist only in the stage of asceticism, which is above all earthly things, and it considers all its followers as belonging to one of the castes recognized by it. Today, no one can become a Hindu on the basis of his religious convictions. Only those who are proved to be members of a recognized caste are Hindus. Brâhmanism does not convert individuals to its faith, but it absorbs an entire caste by establishing the fiction that the caste formerly belonged to it, but this connection was lost in course of time and that it has been re-established by a new consecration. On this basis, Hinduism has converted the semi-wild tribes in Assam to Hinduism. Although the conditions in earlier times might have been somewhat different, when caste-system had not so strongly developed, the fact that wherever Hinduism prevails, caste system exists e.g. in the island of Bali, shows most clearly how the faith in the Hindu gods has been very closely connected at all times with the recognition of social organization.

On the other hand, Buddhism

considers that the only criterion for becoming a Buddhist is to follow Buddha and his teachings. He therefore did not introduce caste system where it did not exist. He has converted persons to his faith, without enquiring to what caste they belonged. This "universalism" which broke through the boundaries of caste system, which were occasionally extended but always respected by the Brâhmanas is the main reason why Buddhism has become a world religion. Brâhmanism was indeed able to establish itself where Indian immigrants settled themselves and impressed their own social system on a foreign people; but it was never able to subjugate the vast region of Central and Eastern Asia, which was only very rarely visited by Indians. Buddhism, on the other hand, found no difficulty in impressing the stamp of its spirit even on people whose views and customs would not tolerate even such a modified form of the Indian caste system.

From what has been said above, it is evident that, with regard to the philosophy of religion Buddhism should be considered as one of the numerous forms of expressions of Indian thought, but that it strongly differs from orthodox Brâhmanism in its social aspect. It may be paradoxically called Hinduism without Brâhmanism, if Hinduism is interpreted as "autochthon-Indian view of life".

Nothing would be able to show more clearly the fact that Buddhism is of the same nature as Brahmanism with regard to the spiritual aspect, than a survey of its history. The three great phases, which it ran through on the Indian soil, are exact parallels of the tendencies which are evident in the development of Brâhmanism.

1. The original community of Buddhists arose at a time when the Vedic

gods and the sacrificial system began to lose their hold on the minds of the Hindus and filled all inquisitive minds with a desire for a new religion. Its nucleus was an order of seekers after emancipation, who gathered round a master, one might say, a school of philosophers like that of Pythagoras. This school attracted to itself a fluctuating circle of laymen, who took an interest in the teachings of Buddha, as "sympathizers" and tried to live to a certain extent in accordance with his precepts. This school of philosophers practised meditation; they tried to act on other strata of society by preaching. The metaphysical system which they promulgated is similar to that of the Hindus at the close of the Vedic period, inasmuch as the doctrines were based mainly on Dharma, Karma, and Nirvâna. Like the other contemporary systems (theology of sacrifices, Sâṅkhya and Jainism), it recognized a multitude of transient gods, but not a god governing the universe. The community around Buddha had no real cult like other societies of philosophers. The members of the order did not require any cult, since they, just like the thinkers of the Upanishads, hoped to attain salvation through meditation and not by performance of sacrifices. The laymen who reposed faith in cultic observances had sufficient opportunity to apply to Brâhmanas or other priests as exorcisers of spirits. For, to start with it must be remarked that Buddhism has not and never been a system of faith in the Christian sense of the West; if a person belonged to Buddhism, it did not prevent him from participating in the worship of the Vedic gods or other rites. After the death of Buddha, the Buddhists preserved the memory of their master, who had attained Nirvâna, by collecting his relics and later on, symbols represent-



ing him (such as, wheel of the law), and finally by erecting statues in his memory. Thus as the number of adherents to the faith increased and the order of the 'exalted persons', from a small circle of disciples of philosophical-meditative ascetics became an enormous institution, aided by the state, with its own large buildings, there arose a worship before the images of Buddha, which in its external form had much in common with that of the gods of the Brahmins, but according to the Buddhist priests was something quite different, since it did not serve to the realization of desires either in this world or in the next but served only for remembering the exalted one who had attained Nirvāna and for purification of one's own heart.

This form of Buddhism sketched here, which was called later on "Hinayāna" (small vehicle) is found even today unchanged in its essential characteristics in Ceylon and Indo-China. It reflects to a certain extent even now the austere character of the religion of a monastic order in the Upanishadic times.

2. The sacrificial system without idols of the Vedic Aryans was gradually replaced in the last centuries of our era by a new form of religion, which clearly bears the traits of a strong non-Aryan, Dravidian elements, viz., the Brāhmanism of the classical time, when it was most flourishing with its worship of Siva, Vishnu, and a rich Pantheon of other gods, with its worship of idols and new forms of devotional exercises, with its perfect philosophical systems and its highly developed technique. In Buddhism also the effect of time is quite apparent. New saviours, and new divinities of which old Buddhism knew nothing, began to be worshipped with a complicated ritual which is not unlike the "Pûjā" of the

Hindus. Deep philosophical speculation created metaphysical systems, the details of which were worked out in accordance with the methods prevalent at that time. However, it is specially noteworthy how the atheistic teachings of the ancient times became more and more theopanthestic and theistic. Buddha himself became a personal-super-personal God, who in his three aspects as absolute, as a supernatural ruler of heaven and as a historical personage visibly wandering on the earth is like Vishnu in his three forms as the incomprehensible Brahma, as the Lord of Vaikuntha, unaffected by sorrow and as Krishna fighting and suffering in this world. Even the conception, which is so different from the older Buddhism, that man, to whom it is not possible to attain salvation by his own power, can attain it through Bhakti with the help of a merciful God, as in Krishnaism, occurs now in the teaching of Bodhisattva and the gracious Buddha Amitābha. Just as in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, besides the end-cavour of the secluded ascetic to attain knowledge by meditation, a new path of salvation is proclaimed, which requires selfless devotion to the well-being of fellow creatures, the ideal of the Buddhists is now to help the process of emancipation of humanity by action. The Buddhism of this new type, richer in mythology, is the "Mahāyāna", the great vehicle, which has extended its triumphal march from the North-Western India across the whole of the "Ganges continent" (Hindustan) and the neighbouring lands in the north (Turkestan, Afghanistan), east (Indo-China) and south (Java) and which still prevails in China, Korea and Japan.

3. About the middle of the first millennium after Christ, religious conceptions, which have been incorporated

in the holy texts, the so-called "Tantras" gained ground in Hindustan. These are very ancient conceptions, which go back to remote antiquity (the excavations of Mohenjo Daro seem to point to the fact that they were known to a large extent about 3000 B.C.) and which were scientifically systematized and embodied into Sanskrit texts and have been plagiarized into Brâhmanical writings. The Tantras contain two things: they teach various rites, mystic actions and incantations by which magical forces can be released or bound in this and the next world (real Tantraism), and then they preach the worship of the female goddesses, the so-called "Saktis" i.e. energies, to whom a ritual which passes over into eroticism is consecrated. These new tendencies are also found in Buddhism. They transform the religion of Gautama into a mystical secret science, which endeavours to bind and unchain the demoniacal forces and often permits a complete surrender to the joys of this world by means of rituals, as strongly contrasted with the overcoming of the sensual propensities through renunciation, taught by Buddha himself. This third Tântrie and Sâktaic form of Buddhism is known as "Mantra-yâna" (vehicle of incantations) or "Vajrayâna" (diamond vehicle or vehicle of the thunderbolt). It has found its followers in all fields of Buddhist mission, no where to such a large extent as in Tibet, Mongolia and in the Himalayan states where it flourishes even today.

The Vajrayâna is the last phase of Buddhism. With it ends its history so full of changes in India. Being almost extinct in the land of its birth towards the end of the first millennium after

Christ, it had nothing more to do with the further development of Indian religion. If it had fallen to its lot to exist still longer in the land in which it had originated, probably under the influence of Islam, religious sects which did not tolerate idol-worship would have arisen in it, just like the sects of Kabirpanthis and the Sikhs in Hinduism and the Sthânakavâsis in Jainism; probably it would have given rise today to reform movements, which like the Brâhma Samâj and the Arya-Samâj would have endeavoured to combine Indian religion with modern Western science. But fate had willed it otherwise, it made Buddhism finally take a separate existence and allowed it to return to its motherland.

Having originally arisen from Brâhmanism, Buddhism existed side by side with it, underwent the same changes as Brâhmanism and finally merged into it, not without leaving clear traces of its former separate existence. Thus, it is like a stream which branched away from another, continued its way for a long time, running always parallel to it, in order finally to be united with it.

Buddhism has been only an episode in India itself, of course an episode of uncommon fruitfulness and far-reaching influence. While it flourished, it was able to create for itself other homes, outside India, its own home, which faithfully preserved the doctrines which had become extinct in the land of the Ganges (Hindustan), doctrines which in spite of all the changes they have undergone have retained even in the foreign lands clearly the essential characteristics, which its history of more than 1000 years in India has imprinted on it.

# A LUMINOUS SOUL OF INDIA

BY DR. FREDERICK B. ROBINSON

It is with the humility of very limited knowledge that I join in this fellowship to pay tribute to a luminous soul of India. The living flame of human life, ever constant yet ever changing in its particles, rises and spreads; the sparks fly upward and vanish into eternity. A hundred years ago the glowing Ramakrishna became part of the flame, and fifty years later he was merged into the radiance of unlimited glory.

Different as they are superficially, the saints of all ages and of all climes are fundamentally very much alike. Ramakrishna of Kamarpukur in Bengal, and Francis of Assisi in Umbria are aspects of the same spirit of love and worship—one made manifest in Italy of the thirteenth century and the other in India of the nineteenth. Their earthly surroundings, their language, their range of practical action and their methods of appeal to others differed, but their essential spirits were in the same relationship with God and of the same disposition of kindness toward men. Consecrated beings like these, no matter what their surroundings, wing home to the eternal in the normal outworking of their natures.

We need not here consider the details of the beliefs of these and other saints, nor appraise their systems of theology. All such walk with God and enter into the pleasures and pains, the joys and sorrows of all living creatures.

There is an inner life of the soul and an outer life of action. The first has no limitations save those of its own cumulative making; the second is circumscribed by material surroundings

and the conflicting forces of many personalities. Ramakrishna, clearly lived an inner life so abundant and far reaching, so ethereal and serenely abstract that few men, concerned mostly with confusing duties in a narrow world of concrete and petty incidents, can even dimly appreciate its free and spacious calm.

We hear people today taking pride in the fact that they are realists. They shape their conduct according to opportunity and do what is expedient in practical affairs, with little or no control by permanent principles. But are they realists in any true sense? Do they not confuse superficial appearance with that which is indeed real and abiding? Ramakrishna was just the opposite of these. To him realization was a process of discovering his own essential self and of identifying it with the source of all life, thought, and action.

It has been said that the difference between the West and the East is the difference between reason and faith. But that is not true, for there is no reason either in the West or the East that, in its last analysis, does not rest on faith. Ultimate truth is had by faith whether it be found in the basic assumption of the physical sciences, the axioms of mathematics or the awareness of our own existence as sentient creatures. By reason, we simply take the gifts of faith and arrange them in different patterns.

The real difference between the West and the East lies rather in their methods of attaining ultimate truth. The West seeks truth through action and striving; the East seeks it through receptive

passivity. The leaders of the East cultivate the technique of relaxation and meditation, the scientists of the West stress experimentation and a life of strenuous endeavour. But a complete method is the combination of the two.

The advantage of the Eastern method, so marked in Ramakrishna, is that it affords a swifter progress in self-realization and awareness of the unity of the universe. Its disadvantage springs from its neglect of the practical affairs of life and consequent remoteness from the daily tasks and troubles of the great mass of humanity, which needs help that is physical, intellectual, and spiritual.

The Western scientists and men of affairs begin with matters close at hand and try by intellectual effort and physical action to make life on earth safe, comfortable, and enjoyable for all. As the greatest of them make progress in their work, they come face to face with ultimate questions which force them to look within themselves, to be quiet and to meditate. The history of almost every successful scientist and man of action is this: the first stage is one of great confidence in the reality of material things as perceived by the senses; then follows much ingenuity in reasoning from observed facts that leads to principles useful in further researches

and practical technology; finally there is a dawning consciousness that behind all the phenomena of which they have become aware, there is a unifying cosmic power or energy, the nature and ways of which are past finding out by the ordinary methods of objective science. At this point they give heed to the admonition, "Be still, and know that I am God!"

While the danger of the Eastern method is the neglect of the practical needs of humanity, so also the Western method has inherent in it the certainty that so many will become preoccupied with practical affairs that all too few will reach the highest stage of meditation on ultimate truth.

Ramakrishna and the divines of all religions render the great service to mankind of stressing the abiding joy that can be had only from a life in harmony with ultimate truth. This joy is one of immediate experience whether or not it can be fully described to others. Ramakrishna had that experience. His ears were filled with the sweet sounds of Krishna's flute, his nostrils took in the fragrance of celestial flowers, his lips tasted the fruits of paradise, his eyes beheld the light that never was on land, or sea, his being was overwhelmed in bliss by the waves of eternity.

## THE RELIGION WE ARE BORN IN

BY PROF. SHEO NARAYANA LAL SHRIVASTAVA, M.A.

### I

Deep within the heart of man, there is a "cry" for God, a thirst for the Divine. To attain the Divine is, as all religions proclaim, the highest goal of man. The great mystics, prophets, and teachers all the world over were men

who felt acutely a mighty "pull" towards the Divine and by their intense heart-searchings and rigorous disciplines succeeded in realizing the Most High. Having done that for themselves, they proclaimed to the world the ways by which the Divine is to be attained.

The different religions that we find in the world today are the outcome of such proclamations of mystic seers. The tenets and injunctions of the various organized religions, which have been flourishing since the dawn of human civilization are, rightly speaking, simply the principles which their prophets found by their *personal experiences* to be conducive to their spiritual growth and which helped them eventually to scale the high summits of spirituality. Every great historical religion so called is nothing but a code of principles and injunctions which has the personal sanction of its prophet or prophets. The task of codification was done either by the Prophet himself or by his disciples. The principles of Islam we find codified in the *Koran*, of Christianity<sup>1</sup> in the *Bible*, of Zoroastrianism in the *Zend-Avesta*, and of the various *sects* of Hinduism in their respective books. It may, however, be added here that there is no *One* book or *One* Prophet in Hinduism to which the entire Hindu nation is bound to owe allegiance. Hinduism comprises within its pale a vast multiplicity of differing creeds and philosophical doctrines which people are left free to choose from. But it would be far from truth to deny that the vast majority of the Hindus also are under the canonical sway of their own chosen sub-creeds. The Vaishnavas, the Sāktas, the Saivas, etc. are under the imposition of their own special canons.

Speaking in general, then, we may say that everywhere what may be called an organized religion, is more or less a *code* of certain principles and injunctions laid down by certain prophets or mystic seers. This, I think, is precisely the reason why an organized

religion fails to be a really helpful pathway to the Divine. If the goal of religion be the attainment of God, then a *codified religion* defeats its own task. A codified religion, a body of fixed and inflexible canons and injunctions professing to be followed by a vast multitude of persons, presupposes that all its followers are on the same level of moral and intellectual attainment and need precisely the same regulative and guiding principles. This, certainly, is a disputable assumption. There is evidently a remarkable difference in the moral and intellectual attainments of different persons and a no less remarkable divergence in their temperaments and proclivities. The principles therefore, that facilitated in his Godward ascent a particular prophet, with his moral, intellectual, and temperamental endowments, need not be profitable for all and sundry. *Individual endowments* are a relevant consideration in chalking out a line of spiritual approach. It is perfectly valid to hold that in a sense, each man has his *own* religion, his own line of spiritual advance, determined by his own moral and mental endowments and his particular place in the scale of evolution. Each man has his own Swadharma. Religion as an endeavour to approach the Divine is an intimately personal problem for everybody. The steps which any man ought to take for his spiritual advance are to be determined by his own store of endowments—moral, intellectual, temperamental, and as we shall see in the sequel, also environmental. The same abominable sin of crushing the *individuality* which is committed by the organized systems of education in schools and colleges, is also committed by the organized religions in the sphere of spiritual training and development. *It is of the very essence of individuality to take its own line of growth.* Steeped in canonical

<sup>1</sup> I mean the *original* Christianity, not modern Christianity with an added wealth of post-Christ literature.

quagmire, the individual, far from finding a swift and easy spiritual lift, gropes in clotted darkness. The modern world is in vital need of this profound truth. Pressed down by the mechanism of inherited beliefs, our minds and souls have lost the power of healthy expansion!

So, the individual must be left to follow the light of his own inner soul. Within him is the Light-house which illumines the path of his voyage through the turbulent ocean of life's struggles, mundane as well as spiritual. The great spiritual giants of the world, the mighty seers, were fearless souls who had the boldness to set aside the conventional ways of prevalent religions around them, who had the courage to refuse to walk over the beaten tracks, and who went on undaunted following the *light within* them. "Save thyself by thy own self," says the *Bhagvad-Gîtâ*. The Lord Buddha laid down the highest law of spiritual ascent in his parting message to his beloved disciple: "Be ye your own light, O Ananda!" This is a commandment of no mean significance for spiritual aspirants. Many a genuine spiritual seeker, I am persuaded to believe, is unprofitably lost in the labyrinthian meshes of conventional ways and inherited methods of organized religions. It is often forgotten that to get into the domains of spirit requires a venture, a plunge, a spirit of innovation and exploration. Religious seeking is not an insipid process of relentless conformity to time-honoured customs, but a wanton flight of the soul alighting on newer and newer domains. The truth-seeking Sannyasin is not merely a wanderer in geographical areas, but an explorer in the vast stretches of the Kingdom of Spirit.

I may here be interrupted with a question: What about the insistence of the Hindu thinkers on the assistance

of a Guru for spiritual advance? Well, the Hindu thinkers do emphasize the indispensability of a Guru in spiritual life, but it is worth while bearing in mind what they mean by a Guru. The Guru or the Guide according to the Hindu teachers is one who is illumined, who understands deeply the meaning of the scriptures, who is above all desire and who is spotlessly pure. The Guru to the Hindus has always signified the spiritually Perfect Man, the Illumined Man, the God-Man. Such a man, by virtue of what he is, is able to *see* the "individual uniqueness" of spiritual aspirants and suggest to them the right and appropriate methods for their spiritual growth. Having himself made his way to Perfection, he is deemed able to show the path to others. The Guru is the clever pilot who is acquainted with the dangerous rocks and turns in the trackless ocean of spiritual voyage. The Guru, such as he is, will be the last man to crush the individuality of the disciples and thrust them into mechanical moulds where they do not fit in. Such a wonderful Guru, we had in recent times in the person of Sri Ramakrishna who is too well known for his extreme judiciousness in the choice of disciples as well as in prescribing methods to each according to his peculiar make-up. But how rare are such Gurus? Is it not better to be without Gurus, unless we find Gurus of such an exalted calibre? The Guruvâda of India was never meant to be a mechanical imposition of external injunctions upon individuals, but to benefit the individual by the advice of an expert to evolve along the line of his own individuality. The crushing of individuality was never the aim. But alas! so has it become now! How many people in India today understand the deeper significance of the insistence on the need of a *Guru* and bear in mind

the high qualifications which the Guru ought to possess? It is a pity to see a vast majority of people, led by the conviction that a Guru is indispensable in religious life, falling a prey to the caprices of ill-qualified Gurus who are agencies, not of spiritual gain, but of spiritual ruin. Against such cheap Guruvâda, we have every right to raise a voice of emphatic protest. Better knock against your own soul's door, than fritter away your energies in search of Gurus! Within, within, is the Guide, seated in the heart of all and driving all to their destined goals. Religion, as an endeavour to apprehend the Divine, calls for a deepening of the soul-sense, a ripening of the intuitional receptivity, the awakening of God-sense, in a word, God-vision. God-vision is the high consummation which the religious endeavour seeks to realize. This is the summit which man tries to ascend through various Sâdhanâs. God-realization is the apex of the religious life. But what is the base to take our start from? To put the question simply: What is the first step in the endeavour to attain God? Where does the religious life *begin*? This is a delicate question which does not receive the attention it deserves. We are all anxious to gain the end, but few of us ponder over the appropriateness of the means we adopt! Not a few there are, who have an abundant fervour for God, but in the very intensity of their fervour, perhaps, they fail to notice the unsoundness of the means they are adopting to attain Him. Quite a large number of persons are deluded into the belief that in order to attain God they must lose all active interest in the so-called secular affairs of life and take to a life of meditation and quietism with a supreme unconcern for everything mundane. I am not here questioning the validity or efficacy of

the path of meditation, but I have always felt that many who take to the quietistic life and the yogic and meditative practices are ill-qualified for them and derive little benefit therefrom. In their anxiety to be religious, they console their hearts by doing some Prânâyâmas or some yogic postures or forced meditation for a few minutes and things like that. Without some such 'practices', they would feel they had no 'religion' in their lives. Good heavens! Is there no room for religion in the humble routine of our everyday life?

## II

Is there an unbridgable gulf between the secular and the religious affairs of life? Can life be divisible into two segments—the one religious and the other secular? Is religion only an embellishment of a certain portion of life, while the rest of it is infected with ignoble secularity? Is religion an exotic growth, or, a redolent blossoming of life in its native simplicity? I, for one, fail to understand why there should be a cleavage between the secular and the religious in life. Religion pervades the whole of life and not any fraction of it. Religion does not consist exclusively in the doing of certain formal or ceremonial practices, but in sanctifying or idealizing life in its entirety, doing the meanest thing with a sense of unbounded sacredness. The modern humanistic reaction against religion is due mainly to the wrong emphasis we have been putting on what religion is, and our sinister separation of what religion is not. We cannot divide the affairs of life by dichotomy into the secular and the religious. To be truly religious is to feel the sacredness of life at every point and every turn. If religion has become positively hateful today, it is because of its sinister separation of God from the world.

God is attained, not by an ascetic and forcible recoil from the healthy and natural urges of life, but by divinizing life in its natural flow. How deluded are they (and their number is legion) who believe that they are genuinely religious simply because they do some *Prânâyâmas* (in the popular sense of breathing exercises) every morning or evening or go to temples or churches or mosques on certain fixed days at fixed hours or do some such things which convention regards as religious. It is a pity to see that such people complacently believe that religion has nothing whatsoever to do with the rest of the affairs of their lives—where they suppose they can do anything without any damage to their religiosity, tell any number of lies and do any amount of cheating. It is against this exclusive or departmental view of religion that the modern mind rebels. The modern mind is keenly sensitive to the wickedness of labelling as *secular* all those major interests of life which make for the happiness of the teeming millions, and throw the halo of religiosity round some occult practices and conventional forms of worship and prayer. What is very much resented by the modern critics of religion is its other-worldly attitude. Religion is made to consist in certain exalted practices which stand on altogether a different footing than the so-called secular affairs of life. Against such an attitude a revolt is natural and even necessary. Religion, if it is to survive any more, must be installed in the affairs of everyday life, and not be a thing of inaccessible heights. If God be the inmost truth of life, "the soul of all the worlds", then we can only find him by a whole-hearted and devotional response to the multifarious urges of life. There is no profit whatsoever in frantic efforts at doing things which

one cannot do by a natural, spontaneous and effortless application of his being. In other words, a deed which one is not *inspired* to do is a misdeed, an unprofitable expenditure of energy. All great deeds—great works of art, profound literatures and philosophies, great discoveries of science—are all inspired. On the breath of inspiration we rise to the highest pinnacles. Inspiration is the inward propulsion, the light that beams forth from within. When we follow the inner urge, we do not go astray, but hit the aim, sure and certain. We act without effort and achieve without failure. We do a thing successfully only when our whole being is attuned to the doing of it. It is this attuning which is of supreme importance in every sphere of life. We observe in the case of a school or a college student who is not *inwardly attuned* to his studies, makes frantic efforts to master his books, studies late hours in the night, but ultimately fails in the examination; while another student with some aptitude and interest, works little, but comes out successful in the examination. This is true *mutatis mutandis* of religious aspirants. The stress laid on *Sâdhâna* by our ancient sages for the realization of the Goal, is very often taken amiss or not understood in its proper import by many of the religious aspirants in our country. They *forcibly* take to certain practices, meditations, prayers, Japa, worshipping of some idols or some ritualistic performances, which they do *mechanically*, and without any natural and spontaneous response to them coming from the very depths of their souls. Of course, *some* benefit may and must result even from such mechanical application assiduously continued, but surely, the results obtained are incommensurable with the labours put in. Progress,



in any sphere, can only be made along the line of least resistance.

The religious practices in their specialized forms can only be fruitful if they are taken up by the aspirants with ease and spontaneity and are not strenuous *impositions* upon them. Evolution is a tardy process, and spiritual evolution is no exception. The futility of taking up practices too austere for oneself is not properly realized by many. It is a tragic waste of energy to endeavour to do that which one finds *too trying* for himself. How I wish people realized this sufficiently!

It is the sinister conviction deep-rooted in the hearts of men that there is no continuity between the so-called secular affairs of life, our daily toil and turmoil, and the alleged "religious" practices, that is responsible for this tragic waste of energy. What fatal error, to think that the religious life has no point of contact with the ordinary course of our mundane existence! Religion is a quality of the *whole life*, a transformation of life in its entirety and at every point of its stretch. The entire course of mundane existence, in all the richness of its diversified contents, must be lit up with a new light, must be permeated with a sense of sacredness and consecration, must be divinized. Herein we have the A B C of religious evolution. God is the apex of the religious life, but the base is where we are, the humble routine of our daily existence. The *beginning* of religious life is not in *new activities*, but in a *new attitude* towards our everyday activities. I say "beginning" advisedly, for the end as I take it to be is not simply living well or living religiously but *seeing God*. Though many of us are earnest about the "end", we are not careful about the "beginning" nor even mindful of it. We do not take the start where we should and that is

our besetting error. We want to jump to the higher rungs and not ascend to them through the lower rungs, the consequence being that we fall down. We cannot have facility in the higher quietistic practices unless our minds and hearts are purified by honesty and uprightness, by purity of motives and transparent sincerity, in the daily calls of life.

The course of our mundane existence is not a meaningless drudgery, a sheer struggle for existence, of no moment to our religious growth, but the field of religious evolution, the "vale of soul-making".

To live religiously is to transform work into worship, to do our daily work with the utmost purity of heart and soul. It was wisely said, *Laborare est orare*, Work is Worship. "All true work," said Carlyle, "is religion." In work we have an incomparable fountain of purification. The seeking of the Divine does not mean a retreat from the active urges of life, but a fuller and intenser participation therein "with sweeter manners, purer laws". Karma-Yoga is union with the Divine *through work*.

Although Karma, Jnâna, and Bhakti are assigned their proper values in the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* and duly emphasized, yet it is evident from the general tenor of the teachings of the *Gîtâ* that Karma-Yoga or spiritualization of work is a necessary propædæutic to higher spiritual life of Jnâna and Bhakti. The *Gîtâ* hints at the obvious fact that activity is the primal and irrepressible function of life. The springs of devotion may be dry in our hearts, the call for quiet meditation may never come to us, our minds may not venture the philosophic quest; but inactive we cannot remain even for a moment. The very maintenance of our being is possible through activity. Activity being

unavoidable, the most natural beginning in religious life, is to purify and spiritualize activity. The reason why humanism is now becoming a popular and wide-spread substitute for religion is the exaggerated other-worldliness of the latter which is detrimental to human progress and well-being. It is against a religion deracinated from our human concerns and human problems that the modern mind revolts. "Religious experience," observes Dr. L. P. Jacks, "is woven with all our experience. To isolate it from the rest of our experience is to misunderstand it."<sup>2</sup> Religious feeling must be brought to bear on our daily concerns and the vital problems of life. "A religion" says Mr. Joad "which the modern man can take seriously must seriously address itself to the needs of the time. If the Western world paid any attention to the religion it professes, it would scrap its armies and navies, close its prisons, sack its judges, and adopt some form of economic communism. These, no doubt, are Utopian projects, but that it should make some attack upon the major evils of our day should not be too much to ask of a religion."<sup>3</sup> A religion altogether *déracinée* from the intimate concerns of our life and existence stands self-condemned. It is out of relation to life and has no meaning for life. To be religious, we must address ourselves whole-heartedly to the concerns of our lives with such purity and sincerity as to make them a pathway to God. This is the attitude of the truly religious man. It is this attitude, earnestly inculcated in every man and woman, that will bring about a new order of civilization. Religion must become a purifying and an uplifting force in the intimate concerns of our

life and existence. Religion must mean a whole-hearted striving for the happiness of humanity, for the removal of communal and racial animosities, for the growth of international fellowship and sympathy and for a better economic order. Religion must mean an earnest response to the call of suffering humanity, a passionate striving to better the social, economic, and political conditions in which we live and move, in a word, all that will make a better and happier humanity.

Lest I be misunderstood, I wish to make my point of view perfectly clear. I am not advocating *mere* humanism as it is understood these days in the sense of a "substitute" for religion, nor am I opposed to the quietistic methods of approach to God. Surely, God-realization is the crowning consummation of the religious life and *inwardness* is the *sine qua non* of this ultimate goal. But a genuine inwardizing disposition is not acquired by forcible attempts at it, but emerges as the finest fruition of purity of conduct and whole-hearted discharge of moral obligations.

Then only one can *profitably* take to the quietistic methods. Like the bud which slowly unfolds itself, spiritual life is a gradual blossoming. The increasing appreciation of moral values in our daily life, inculcates in us a greater and greater inwardness by purifying our being from the grossness of lower passions and appetites. By a full discharge of all our moral responsibilities in their various shades we acquire purity of heart, and out of the purity of heart wells forth abundance of peace which is indispensable for success in spiritual Sādhana. Religion, ere it develops into, in the words of Whitehead, "what a man does with his solitariness", is of necessity, what he does with his gregariousness, his relationships with his society, his country and

<sup>2</sup> Science and Religion: P. 160.

<sup>3</sup> C. E. M. Joad: The Present and Future of Religion, P. 215.

humanity. Swami Vivekananda expressed a profound truth when he said that religion is one with the highest morality. The 'sensus numinis' in every man, which we take to be the very essence of religion, is directly proportional to his moral growth, to the degree he has discharged his social obligations and deepened his sympathies with the needy and suffering humanity around him. Nothing seems to be more irreligious than preoccupation with religious practices and rituals to the neglect of social obligations and duties and the needs of one's own moral perfectibility. Such preoccupation is in its very nature unrighteous and wicked. In accentuating this truth, the present-day "revolt" against religion, is not doing, as many would like to suppose, a disservice, but a valuable service to the cause of *true* religion.

In all this, however, I am not propounding a new gospel, but an old, old teaching of the *Bhagavad-Gitâ* which now seems to have been deplorably lost sight of by a vast number of Hindus (also, of course, by other religionists) who complacently think themselves religious in preoccupying themselves with certain religious practices and rituals with which they are wholly out of tune, and which they doggedly pursue to the entire neglect of their social duties. The *Gitâ* lays a strong emphasis on an objective and social moral idealism as the very *sine qua non* of spiritual illumination. Writes Prof. Sircar: "The *Gitâ* strikes a note of ethical realism inasmuch as it represents the reality and sacredness of the moral order and the imperativeness of the moral law which none can disturb with impunity. The moral order is not a shadow but is directly centred in the Divinity. . . . The direct touch of God with the moral order has made it possible for the *Gitâ* to transform

moral life into spiritual life. For in the height of our moral being we feel that work is worship. . . . The *Gitâ* is eloquent about the possibility of attaining an expansive vision through the fulfilment of moral order."<sup>4</sup> (Italics mine). In fact, it is irreligious to ignore the moral order. No amount of preoccupation with the religious practices and rituals can be an adequate compensation for them. If the prevailing religions in the world have become positively hateful today and are sought to be overthrown, it is because they have thrown the moral order in the background. "We in India," says a recent writer, "suffer only too acutely from the effects of our preoccupation with religion and its rituals. But India's so-called spirituality is not really so deep entrenched as many of us would like to imagine. It is a mantle of myth in which our ego attempts to keep itself warm against the cold blasts of misery and degradation. It is something of a protective legend and we take some flattering unaction to our souls in order to screen from our view defects in our social system which we cannot without shame defend."<sup>5</sup> Similarly Sir Hari Singh Gour wrote recently in *The Daily News*: "The Indian is essentially a religious man. Religious propaganda has obscured his vision to mundane things. He has to correct that perspective if he is to make any intellectual advance in the assimilation of knowledge. His innate pessimism must yield to the glowing optimism of science. His mental outlook must not be backward but forward. He must treat life as a fact and make the most

<sup>4</sup> M. N. Sircar: *Mysticism in Bhagwat-Gita*, pp. 74-75.

<sup>5</sup> See the article on "Religion and Social Revolution" by Hirendra Nath Mukerjee in *The Twentieth Century* for Feb., 1936.

of it for himself and his fellowmen. He must dismiss religious obscurantism from the plain facts of existence." And the way out from these sinister influences of Hinduism Dr. Gour finds in "a nation-wide campaign for mass conversion to Buddhism" since "Buddhism," according to him, "is nothing more than Hinduism without its dogmas." Now, there is an unmistakable earnestness in what these writers say, though I will be the last man to concur with their no-religion tendency. There is no denying the fact that quite a large number of people in our country are victims to "religious obscurantism" with an undue preoccupation in certain practices and rituals which profit them little, with an other-worldly and cynical attitude towards things mundane, with a complacent belief that religion consists only in some formalistic routine, and with some wrong-headed notions of renunciation and the nothingness and vanity of things. Such people are far from realizing that to make the most of life for themselves and their fellowmen is the very vestibule through which they have *necessarily* to pass in order to reach the inner sanctuary of religion, and that the fulfilment of the moral order is the necessary condition of spiritual growth. We should avoid on the one hand the Scylla of irreligious humanism, and on the other the Charybdis of blind and indiscriminate acceptance of the mechanical formulas and rituals of institutionalized religions without any regard to one's "individuality".

Today, religion all the world over, is facing a very serious crisis. The "modern" mind everywhere is in "revolt" against religion. It will not do for us simply to dub all modernist movements as satanic and watch them with a lofty unconcern. We should go deep into the very heart of the problem

and raise the question: Why is there this discontent with religion all around? Why is religion losing its hold on the minds of men? It is because religion everywhere in its institutionalized forms has become a mere dead burden of canonical injunctions and practices without any living adaptation to the "individualities" of persons, a mere matter of formal conformity which has proved more a drag on true spiritual progress, rather than a means to it; it is because the empty shells of mere formulas do not bring any genuine spiritual solace to the being of man. Further, the ultra-other-worldly tone of religion which creates an artificial difference between the secular and the religious affairs of life, tends to make man indifferent to social well-being; hence the wide-spread humanistic reaction against religious pre-occupation. Lastly, what is still more intolerant to the rational temper of the age is the obscurantism, the foliage of irrational dogmas and superstitious beliefs, in which organized religion with its appendages of priest-craft and churchianity, seeks a comfortable shelter. If religion has to be rescued from its present crisis and made acceptable to modern minds, we shall have to remove all these taints from its fair face. One thing is now absolutely certain that nothing can stem the tide of protestantism against the excesses and absurdities of institutionalized religions, and that the day of priest-craft and authoritarianism is gone.

The religion that is to be will be a complete breakaway from the cants and shibboleths of organized religions and priest-craft, will do away with the sinister distinction between the "secular" and the "religious", make all work sacred, will recognize the sanctity and religiosity of striving for the commonweal and the service of humanity, and

will be a potent influence in ennobling our social, economic, and political relationships, and above all, will make us approach the problems of God and spirituality from perfectly scientific and philosophical view-points. It will drag us out of the weeds and back-waters of traditionalism into the austere atmos-

phere of critical search, where every individual will be free to make *his own* experiments with Truth, according to his own make-up and his unique "individuality". Religion will not die out as many think, but surely, the old forms are fatally doomed.

## HEAVENLY GIFTS

(DIARY LEAVES)

BY PROF. NICHOLAS DE ROERICH

Joyfully we followed all the news and articles dedicated to the glorious celebrations of Sri Ramakrishna's centenary. How wonderful that here on our confused and disturbed earth such unanimous devotional reverence and admiration was possible. And this recognition of the Great Attainment came from various countries, from many entirely different people. All dedications to the Blessed Bhagavân were permeated with a profound love from the heart—it means that the message of the Paramahansa deeply touched the very soul of humanity.

People should rejoice at every such unanimous manifestation, for in it is expressed the striving towards the Good and in this common bliss is already contained a real Heavenly Gift, which mankind should cherish above all ages and nations. And did not the Bhagavân himself, in his goodness, show the example of tolerance and all-containment? If people would only evince more care and reverence for all heavenly sendings, which continuously illumine our dusky earthly life!

Heavenly Gifts in human consciousness are always connected with lightning speed. Everything from the Highest, everything from Above natural-

ly directs human imagination towards light, towards sparkling, towards urgency. And so it is. The greatest realizations can come like lightning, instantaneously. But yet another condition has to be cognized in our earthly understanding. For in these high manifestations was revealed a heavenly language whereas ours is an earthly tongue. Even for the highest conceptions we have but poor clumsy expressions.

If around the concept of Heavenly Gifts we shall gather all our conventional definitions, it will yet be but a weak and limited expression about the Ineffable.

Only the heart will give life to such expressions as solemnity, greatness, ecstasy, tremor, joy. Without a transfiguration through the heart all these best words will remain but dead sounds. Therefore it had been ordained since antiquity that the best gifts should be reverently accepted and dignifiedly introduced into the earthly life.

Love is like lightning, but it must be educated and affirmed in full consciousness, or even this heavenly feeling will be but the tremor of a mirage.

Many epics tell of the sending of Heavenly Gifts into earthly surround-

ings. By such legends the effort was made to warm human light-mindedness and to introduce into the consciousness a worthy understanding.

Heavenly Gifts, if not introduced lovingly and with care into earthly life, will be as torn-off wings, which even despite their magnificent beauty will yet remain cut off. But by the Highest Will wings are given for blissful flights. Without a genuine ardent striving towards spiritual flights man will forget about the wings, which will become dusty amidst the household rubbish. Tiny grey entities will creep out from dark corners to clothe the God-sent magnificence into morbid grey rugs.

Stuffed birds with motionless spread wings always arouse a sad thought that the symbol of movement and highest flights has been nailed down and is thus condemned as a worthless thing in the dust.

The culture of Heavenly Gifts in earthly conditions is a difficult science. Precisely difficult, for this realization is born in labour. And precisely is it a science, because many experiments, many tests had to take place until the Heavenly blossom unfolded itself unharmed in its entire predestined grandeur.

Not only the rare chosen ones are called to care for the blossoming of Heavenly Gifts on earth. In every home there should be a sacred garden, into which the Heavenly Gifts should be brought with the greatest love and surrounded with the best offerings which only the human heart is capable to render.

At times people in despair imagine that Heavenly Gifts have ceased to be poured out. But they do not ponder whether their own eyes are vigilant enough to discern the Invisible Light amidst the glare of the sunshine. Do

not people take refuge from blissful rain under an umbrella? And do not people flee into dungeons from purifying thunder storms and from majestic waves of Light?

Do not people try to make a small thing of the Greatest? And how sad it is when Heavenly Gifts—these generous beautiful treasures are cast to derision or locked up in the safe of a miser!

These deniers will try to invent all imaginable excuses to shift on anyone else their own ignorance and rudeness. Little physical effort is needed to tear off a beautiful flower. And in the same way is very little coarse force required to defile the highest Heavenly Gift. But if anyone will argue that this is already a common place, let us reply with the words of Vivekananda: "If you know what is good, then why don't you follow the ordinances?" In these significant words thunders a direct challenge to all who violate and abuse the Highest. And is this question nowadays not most imperative?

If anyone will tell you that it is unnecessary to repeat, answer him: "If something useful is not applied, one has to re-affirm it!" A discussion whether help should at all be rendered, would be immoral. Everyone will agree that one should always help. This means that if somewhere something most precious is being neglected, then one should endlessly reiterate it as long as one's voice lasts. And if anyone sees that a humanitarian principle is violated by ignorance or malevolence, it is his duty to point this out, if only he himself understands wherein are true values.

Heavenly Gifts are multifarious. Generously and magnificently are these beautiful helpers sent to assist humanity. The shower of Bliss is poured in benevolent generosity but only drops of

this treasure reach. But every thought about Heavenly Gifts already strengthens the heart. Especially now when human hearts are in such confusion and deep pain, one should strive after the highest panacea—after Heavenly Gifts.

“Thy benevolence fills  
My hands. In profusion it is pouring  
Through my fingers. I can not  
Keep all. I am not able to distinguish  
The glowing streams of richness. Thy  
Benevolent wave pours through the hands  
Upon earth. I do not see who will gather  
The precious gems. The tiny sprays  
Upon whom will they fall? If only I could  
Carry home the Heavenly Gift.”

## HINDUISM IN BURMA

BY SWAMI JAGADISWARANANDA

Burma is, both geographically and culturally, a part and parcel, a projection and portion of the Indian continent. This Suvärna-Bhumi, or the land of gold, as tradition calls it, has been professedly Buddhist ever since the introduction of the Faith in her soil in the early centuries of the Christian era. Hinayāna Pali canon or the Southern School of Buddhism is the religion of the people in general. It was also the State religion of Burma till the early eighties of the last century when she lost her independence. This beautiful country owes its religion and philosophy, art and literature, culture and civilization, and in fact everything, to the Blessed One, His Dharma and Saṃgha.

But as Hinduism prevails in the main land Burma could not escape the influence of the Hindu religion. Burma had in the long past, as in the present, close commercial contact with India. Hindu maritime activities which commenced before the Christian era and which culminated in the establishment

of Hindu colonies in the South-East Asia had their repercussions on the coast of Burma as well. Small trading principalities such as Prome, Rangoon, Pegu and Thaton probably came into existence as a result of the Hindu expansion overseas. Hindu traders who had migrated to Burma brought with their merchandise their deities for worship and installed them in temples. “It is probably their shrines” says Mr. G. E. Harvey, I.C.S. in his *Outline of Burmese History* “that form the original portion of such pagodas as the Shwemawdon at Pegu, the Shwedagon at Rangoon and the Shwezayan at Thaton.” Mr. Niharanjan Roy, in his very interesting work on early Indo-Burmese historical and cultural relations,—which is the first of its kind—rightly remarks that Hindu elements in Burma seem to have made their mark as early as the sixth century A.D. and continued to have its share of influence on the people till the fourteenth. It is to be noted that the Hindu element was mainly confined to the Hindu immi-

grants only and could not influence the population at large as in Siam, Cambodia, Indo-China, and other Hindu colonies in the Far East. It seems that there were occasional struggles between Hinduism and Buddhism as indicated by the following tradition. At Pegu there was a King named Tissa who was a staunch admirer of Hinduism, if not an actual adherent. He made no obeisance to Buddha but honoured the Brâhmanas. He forbade the worship of the Blessed One on pain of death and cast all images of Buddha into the river. But by the fervent devotion of Bhadradevi, the daughter of a Talaing merchant, for Buddha he was converted into Buddhism and eventually made Bhadradevi his consort. Though Hinduism, like Buddhism, could never be popular in the Burmese world as in many Hindu colonies in South East Asia, it is at the same time true that certain traces of Hindu rites and rituals and myths and traditions got interwoven into the texture of the social and religious life of the country. For instance the Burmese children even now keep a tuft of hair which is made into a knot on the top of the head after the fashion of the Hindu children of North India. There are some other Buddhist traditions and customs that appear to be most probably adaptations from Hindu ones.

Hindu influence is also indicated by the names of some places of Upper and Lower Burma. Brahma-Desha, the oriental name of Burma, has also been derived from the primal Hindu Deity, Brahmâ. A tradition runs that a Sakyan Hindu Prince of Kapilavastu, Avi by name, came to Upper Burma by way of Manipura with a large number of attendants. He established the town of Tagaung on the banks of the Irrawaddy. He christened this country as Brahmadesha or the Land of Brahmâ

after the name of the Hindu god of creation. Old Prome was in ancient times a centre of Vishnuite influence. So it was called Bissunomyo, which is equivalent to Vishnupura or the city of Vishnu. It is also referred to as Sri-kshetra after the sacred name of modern Puri, a stronghold of Hinduism on the other side of the Bay. A Burmese chronicle tells that the ancient city of Prome that yields the oldest Pali inscriptions in Burma was founded by Rishi Vishnu with the help of the son of Visvakarmâ, the divine architect and six other divinities namely Indra, Nâga, Garuda (his Vâhana), Chandi, Parameswara, and Gavampati. This helps us to understand that Hindu traditions of town-planning and temple-building were at work in those days. The town of Taungdwin, founded about the middle of ninth century A.D. was called Ramavati after the name of the epic hero, Râma. The old name for Pegu, a prosperous town not far away from the city of Rangoon, is Ussa which is but a corrupted form of Odra or Orissa. This shows that Pegu was once colonized by the Orissans. The consorts of the chiefs of Shan States were titled Mahâdevi which proves the penetration of the Hindu influence.

From the archaeological discoveries of Hindu deities and temples it is understood beyond doubt that Hinduism played a significant part in Upper Burma. The only ancient Hindu temple now extant in Burma called the Nat-hlaung temple is situated at Pagan in the heart of this Buddhist country. It is now in a dilapidated condition and some of its images are very much defaced and deformed. The presiding deity of the shrine is Vishnu himself seated in Padmâsana on his carrier bird Garuda in the main sanctum. Four images of him stand at the four sides of its square obelisk at the



centre of the vaulted temple. Its walls and niches are adorned with stone images of the ten principal and other subsidiary incarnations of Vishnu. The temple was built by the Buddhist King Anawrahta of Pagan for the honoured Hindu priests of his court who were astrologers and who used to take a prominent part in the performance of all rituals and ceremonies of the court. A Tamil inscription of the twelfth century A.D. found at Myin-pagan says that a porch to this temple was added by a South Indian native of Malabar named Sri Kulasekhara Nambi who was a devotee of the Vaishnava saint Kulasekhara. From an inscription on the temple, Hultzsch says that it was very well known to the Vaishnavas all over Burma. Hindus from various parts of the country used to go on pilgrimage to it. Monsieur Charles Duroiselle, sometime Superintendent, Archaeological Survey of Burma, asserts that the temple is at least ten centuries old. The image of Vishnu, the main deity, is now housed in the Berlin Museum.

As Bhagavân Buddha has been incorporated in the Hindu Pantheon, He is also one of the ten Avatâras that adorn the niches in the walls. The Varâha image is with his consort Bhudevi. The Narasimha figures have six hands each with sharp nails to tear off the body of Hiranyakasipu. The representation of Râma is a standing image of Tribhanga variety, in other words, with three bends in the body. Parasurâma holds in four hands the Parasu, Khadga, Vâna and Dhanu as the *Agni purana* describes the divinity. Kalki, as the *Vaikhânasâgama* states, carries in his four hands Sankha, Chakra, Khadga and Khetak. Matsya, Kurma, Vâmana, or Trivikrama images are of traditional type. The last one is of

Suryanârâyana as the Vedic Surya has been identified with Vishnu.

A bronze Vishnu image now at the Pagan Museum has been found at Pagan by a Buddhist monk. It is the Bhogasthanaka Murti of Vishnu one foot high with a Udarabandha or a belt round the belly. A celebrated King of Pagan, Kyanzittha by name, as a legend goes, was in one of the former births a sage named Vishnu, living contemporaneously with Buddha, and on another occasion was born in the family of Râma, King of Oudh. He also claimed his identity with Vishnu. Kyanzattha was the son of Anawratha, the founder of the famous Vishnu temple at Pagan. He styled himself as the Tribhuvanâditya Dharamarâja in imitation of the name of Vishnu who in his Trivikrama Avatar placed one foot on Bhuloka or the earth world, another on the Antarikhsa loka or the mid-world between heaven and earth and a third on the Pâtâlaloka or the nether world. Vishnu was worshipped by the Hindu colonists of Burma as early as the seventh century A.D. Daily worship of Nârâyana-Silâ was in vogue among the Brahmins. Several Vishnuite icons have been unearthed near old Prome. They are probably the oldest specimens of the Hindu sculpture of Burma. One of them is peculiar as its features do not conform to any known textual canon of Pratima-Lakshman or Rupamandalan. For in it Vishnu and Lakshmi stand side by side. Vestiges of Hinduism have also been traced in Thaton and other deltaic districts of Lower Burma. Two Archaeological finds of Vishnuite sculpture from Thaton represent the well-known Ananta Sayya episode of Vishnu. The scene also pictures the other deities of the Hindu Triad. A similar plastic representation of the popular mythology of Vishnu has been found near old

Prôme. A multitude of Vishnu images have also been explored in various parts of the country. From all these it may be ascertained that the popular Hindu God Vishnu was able to penetrate into the tangle of traditional legendary history of Burma. Siva and Brahmâ, the other two Gods of Hindu Trinity, also exerted some influence in Burma. Some stray finds of Lingams and of Saivite Gods in stone and bronze have been made from time to time.

A Saivite dynasty of a long line of Kings appears to have reigned from the fifth to the tenth century A.D. in Arakan. In the hilly buffer region between India and Burma coins bearing Saivite symbols, that is the trident of Siva on the reverse and the recumbent humped bull on the obverse, have been found. Col. Phayre in his "Coins of Arakan, Pegu and Burma" remarks that at least two lines of Kings ruling at Arakan were known as Chandra dynasty, in the local legendary history. It was reported by the Archaeological Survey of Burma in 1926 that the names of a number of Hindu Kings adopting the surname Chandra, such as Bama Chandra, Priti Chandra and Vira Chandra have also been deciphered in a Devanagari stone inscription found at the Pagoda of Mrohaung. Coins bearing Vishnuite symbols on one side and Saivite ones on the other have also been found in Arakan as well as in Burma. They belong in the view of Colonel Phayre to a period from the 6th to the 8th century of the Christian era. Mon. Duroiselle finds "an irrecusable evidence of strong Hindu influence in early times in Arakan, and of an early Hindu settlement at its capital city, Mrohaung or in its vicinity." In fact there were found on a hill situated close to it remains of a Hindu Temple out of the debris of which many damaged and disfigured

Hindu-Gods have been recovered. Numismatic evidence has proved that the Hindu Kings of later Gupta and early Pala period had close contact with Mrohaung. Mr. Twu Sein Ko, late Superintendent of Archaeology in the country, has often urged the existence of the Linga Cult of Hinduism in Burma evidenced by the finds of Siva-Lingam. A Hindu scholar of Burmology has observed that Vishnuite and Saivite Hindu temples once existed at Thaton wherefrom 14 or 15 stone relief panels roughly weathered have been brought and preserved in the museums. They contain indistinct images of Hindu divinities such as Hanuman, Siva, the Bull Nandi, Mahisâsura (the Buffalo demon), Siva-Pârvathi, etc.

Images of Brahmâ are rare not only in Burma, but also in the main land. Perhaps only at Ajmere an independent temple was dedicated to Brahmâ. Out of the several images of Brahmâ found in Burma two are important. They are now sheltered in the museums at Rangoon and Pagan. Both are seated in Padmâsana with folded hands. They are represented with three heads covered with matted locks, beautifully dressed in the Jatânmukuta fashion crowned with floral ornaments. Some images of Brahmâ are carved in a very low relief in the faces of the interior square pillars of the Manuha and Nanpaya temples at Pagan. Ganesha, Surya and other minor gods also found favour with the Hindu population in Burma. Ganesha with his bulging belly and protruding nose was a favourite god of the Hindus in Burma, as the god of success and of the Buddhists as the guardian deity of their shrines. One icon of Surya found at Mrohaung is pictured as seated with two goddesses Usa and Pratyussa, in a seven-horsed chariot with Varuna as the driver. He wears a bodice and jewels in his legs. His

two hands carry two full-blown lotuses and his head is adorned with Kirit-mukut. It resembles the image of the Sun-god at Konarak near Puri.

Hindu elements are profusely present in the early Mon inscriptions of Burma. Hinduism like Sanskrit Buddhism is equally responsible for the frequent use and occurrence of Sanskrit religious terms, royal names and titles and even certain social observances. According to these ancient Burmese records the Hindu Brahmins had great influence in the Buddhist courts. They were also free to adore their favourite God Nârâyana. The Brahmins were not in the exclusive enjoyment of this privilege, for freedom of worship was also extended to the Hindus of the other three castes. An early inscription says that the four castes of the Hindus shall fulfil their Dharma too. Brahmins took prominent part in the religious ceremonies of the Kings and performed characteristically Hindu rituals. Some Mon inscriptions, throwing much light on this point, may be summarized as follows: At the auspicious time of the Godhuli Lagna the Hindu astrologers bathed the seventeen pillars. They made in all the ten directions decorations of plantains adorned with sugarcane. They arranged vessels of gold and silver full of water. They poured water in conch-shells wherein they put cleaned rice and Durbâ grass. They made altar oblations and altar candles in honour of Nârâyana and worshipped him with flowers. An essentially Hindu custom was observed in connection with the Buddhist coronation ceremonials presided over by Brahmins. Daughters of Brahmins with other maidens had spun the thread and made on them 108 spools wherewith the Brahmins bound up the pillars. It is also added that the Brahmins who knew the *Vedas* fulfilled the Brâhmana Dharma. Brahmins used to

offer boiled rice in cup-shaped vessels with candles stuck in them. At the time of worship the expert Brahmins used to wear loin-cloth and wrapper with white skirts. Worship of the Hindu God Nârâyana seems to have been an indispensable item of all court ceremonies. In this connection it is interesting to note the history of the Ponas who originally came to Burma from Manipur (Assam) in the days of the Burmese Kings. The term Pona was originally used to denote the Brahmins. It has now lost its original significance. The Manipuri Brahmins were brought captives as Manipur as well as Assam were once temporarily annexed in 1819 to Burma. The Ponas were greatly honoured in the Burmese courts as well as in Burmese society, as versed in astrology and priest-craft. Most of them embraced Buddhism and to all appearance are Burmese Buddhists. Still they have clung to the appellation of Ponas. A section of the Rangoon city even now goes by the name of Pona Basti. The descendants of the Ponas are not many in number at present and can still be seen in Upper-Burma, particularly in the town of Mandalay. Some of them are living as nail-cutters.

Andhra-Kalinga played an important part in the early history of Burma. Pali inscriptions found at old Prome are in a script very closely allied to the Canara-Telugu script of the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. Hindu merchants of Andhra-Kalinga country settled in Lower Burma and by the establishment of marital and domestic relations with the local aborigines created a race called Talaings. People of Lower Burma are still called Talaings. The term used as early as the 10th century A.D. in Mon records is derived from Telingana or Trikalanga. The name used to mean almost the whole Andhra-Kalinga, or Telugu zone. Some scholars think that

Talaing script is but a derivation of Telugu script. The Talaings educated and civilized the Burmese aborigines. In Upper Burma admixture of the Hindus and the local people produced what may be called the Burmese race. The South-Indian Pallavas seem to have intercourse with the Royal dynasty of old Prome. Two names, Sree Prabhu Varma and Sree Prabhu Devi, titles of the then reigning King and Queen, have been found in an inscription of old Prome. The Royal title of the Pallava dynasty well-known in South Indian History have the name-ending Verman. Old Prome, and for the matter of that Lower Burma was dominated during the 6th, 7th, and 8th centuries by a dynasty of Kings, named Vikrama, who were probably Hindus. The dead body of the Vikrama Kings used to be burnt and the ashes buried in big urns having inscriptions on them, from a study of which the knowledge about the Vikrama dynasty has been derived.

In the 13th century Pagan fell from power with the invasion of the Mongol army of Kublai Khan and along with its fall Hinduism began to decline in Burma. The condition of Hinduism on the main land at that time was anything but vigorous. The larger part of India had by then been subjugated by the Mohammedan invaders. The proselytizing zeal of Islam was then at a white heat, and Hinduism suffered irretrievably through the vandalism and iconoclasm of the invaders. Religious injunctions prohibiting sea-voyage brought the Hindu maritime activities to a standstill and thus spelt the ruin of the Hindu colonies overseas. Having fallen on evil days Hinduism could not keep up its contact with its offshoots across the seas. Cut off from the vitalizing current of the main body the branches gradually withered away and Hinduism

in Burma eventually disappeared in the 14th century. For about 500 years, from the 14th to the 19th century Hinduism was almost extinct in Burma. After the annexation of Burma to British India, Hindu traders again flocked to the land of gold and revived Hinduism. This fresh Hindu migration synchronized with the Hindu awakening in India. During the last half century the Hindu population in Burma has swelled up to about 6 lakhs. Throughout Burma the Hindus are now seen in all walks of life earning good reputation as doctors, lawyers and educationalists. The Hindus have erected a number of Temples in the capital city of Rangoon and in other parts of the province. In Rangoon there are big temples dedicated to Siva, Mahâvir and other Hindu gods. The Hindu communities from different parts of India have their respective shrines where they congregate for worship. The Temple erected by the Chettiar community at Tambe, a few miles from Rangoon, and that built by the late Râjâ Reddiar in the heart of the Rangoon city, deserve special mention. The Hindus also take pains to celebrate their religious ceremonials with processions. There are Durgâbâris in Rangoon, Moulmein, Yenaungaunn, and Bassien, conducted by the Bengali Hindus, where they observe all the important festivals. Mother Durgâ is worshipped in earthen image or Pratimâ in many towns of Burma. Hindu religious teachers from different parts of India also visit Burma from time to time.

The Rangoon Branch of the Ramkrishna Mission is playing no mean part in popularizing the Hindu religion and culture among the people of Burma. The Mission conducts a charitable hospital in Rangoon, which is one of the biggest in the province. Relief work during flood, earthquake, and other natural

catastrophies, and other humanitarian activities have popularized the Mission and, through it, Hinduism in Burma. Burmese leaders of thought and culture gladly preside over and speak in the meetings held to celebrate the anniversaries of the Hindu saints. The Mission also conducts a free Rest House and a free Reading Room and Library which are also very popular. For the dissemination of Hindu religion and philosophy regular discourses are held by the monks of the Mission and other Hindu religious organizations. The Provincial Hindu Mahāsabhā has been doing good work in Burma by upholding the cause of Hinduism. Though the Hindu-Buddhist marriage is a long standing problem yet no attempt was made to solve it. During the last session of the Provincial Hindu Mahāsabhā of Burma the question was taken up and a strong committee has been formed to devise means for legalizing the marriage between the Hindus and the Burmese Buddhists. Nor are the Hindus unmindful of education. The Library of the Rangoon University is the munificent gift of a Hindu millionaire. Hindus of all ranks contributed liberally to the University building fund. Three High Schools, namely the Bengal Academy, the Reddiar Institute, and the B. E. T. School, are run by the Hindus and are meant mainly for the Hindu boys and girls. There is also a number of minor schools in and outside of Rangoon maintained by the Hindus.

Papers in Bengali, Hindi, Gujrati, Telegu, Tamil and other Hindu languages are run in Rangoon. Many associations of the Hindu communities have been formed to safeguard and promote their religious interests. It should be remembered that the religious ideas of the Hindus have not influenced the people of modern Burma to any appreciable extent. The days of the Burmese Kings when Hinduism enjoyed considerable influence are now over. Burma by virtue of her geographical position has become the meeting-ground of various races and cultures. This commingling of races at the present time has brought about profound ethnic changes and cultural fusion in Burma. The position of the Hindus will be quite different in future Burma separated from India. Hence the Hindus should lose no time in cementing the cultural link that has been built up between Burma and India in the course of the last half century. Cultural and religious unity of India and Burma has been a bit strengthened by the election of the well-known Buddhist monk Bhikku Ottama as the President of the last session of the All-India Mahāsabhā. Leaders of Hindu thought and culture should see that centres of Hindu ideas and activities are started in the near future in Burma and other countries with Hindu colonies for the preservation and propagation of the Hindu religious and philosophical ideas.

## THE OTHER WORLD

BY PROF. E. E. SPEIGHT

The glory of our human kind  
Is the rare music of the mind  
That from its mortal prison-bars  
Commingles with the very stars.

A folded arm, a glance upthrown  
 At some wild songster swiftly flown,  
 A sudden waking in the dark,  
 The brief ascension of a spark,  
 May set ajar a secret door  
 And make us free for evermore  
 Of an undreamable domain,—  
 The world that in a drop of rain  
 Gleams and is gone, the paradise  
 That in a note of music lies,  
 The realm of lovely imagery  
 One single word may come to be.

The things we do from hour to hour  
 All unaware, may lead us there;  
 There is no purity or power  
 But streams out from the Great Unknown  
 Into the soul, as winds intone  
 Triumphantly the liturgy  
 Wherein all life doth blend,  
 That was from the beginning  
 And shall be unto the end.

## THE MESSAGE OF MOTHERHOOD

BY KSHITINDRA NATH TAGORE, B.A.

### THE MESSAGE

A Bhagiratha of Ancient India brought down the sacred river Ganges from the high peak of the Himalayas and converted the Aryāvarta into a veritable green garden, so the American poet of modernism, Walt Whitman, opened out a new vista of thought in the New World and introduced a new trend of ideas into the heart of the West, when with a full heart and forceful voice he sang a paean of praise for the motherhood of woman in the following strain :—

“I am the poet of the woman, the same as the man.

And I say it is as great to be a woman as to be a man.

And I say there is nothing greater than the mother of men.”

It is difficult to express this idea better in any other form. To try to do it, would only mar its forceful beauty. It is perhaps only in the divine literature of Ancient India, and of no other country, that one comes across the glory of motherhood described in such a magnificent language. It must, however, be said that even Whitman has placed the woman on the same level with the man, when he says in a negative way that “there is nothing higher than to be a mother of men.” It was only the sages of Ancient India, the land of sacred traditions, who had fully realized the true greatness of woman and did not naturally hesitate to utter not merely a negative truth regarding her, but enunciated a posi-

tive truth, when they said that "because of her privilege of being a mother of children, she deserves our full respect, esteem and blessings too; it is she who brightens the home; woman is the presiding goddess of prosperity in the house—in fact, there is no difference between her and the goddess." (Manu)

#### THE IDEAL OF THE RISHIS

None but the sages of yore could utter the words so radiant like sunshine and at the same time so soft like lotus-leaves. Whitman's vision did not go beyond considering her as the mother of men. It is the Aryan Rishis alone who felt themselves gratified and blessed by having the privilege of divine vision to look at woman both as the mother of men and as the presiding goddess of the hearth and home. The Rishis having themselves realized this noble truth showed humanity at large the easy way to attain this high ideal by advising them to look at the wives of other people as one would look upon one's own mother. It is through their incessant efforts and advice that this noble sentiment regarding the womanfolk has, as it were, entered into the very marrow of the Hindu race. It has succeeded for centuries in protecting the Hindu society from the dreadful havoc of sexual immoralities. It is to be regretted, however, that this noble sentiment is fast disappearing into oblivion, and the traditional teaching about the sanctity of a woman's person is going to be a thing of the past, while the Western nations, although they seem to be unable to measure the height and the depth of this lofty sentiment, are going ahead towards this goal, the key to peace and happiness. The Western mind is awakening, though slowly, to the undoubted wisdom of the sublime conception as treasured up in India's sacred books.

#### A MISCHIEVOUS SUGGESTION

That this lofty ideal is in these days losing its hold on the Hindu mind, has been due to the present-day wrong system of education, so different from that introduced by the Rishis. The wisdom of the Rishis enabled the Hindu society to take its stand on high ideals. It is, however, the fashion nowadays to say that one can carry on one's life's duties without the least help from religion, or rather Dharma, the basis of those high ideals; nay more, by throwing Dharma out one would be none the worse. Could there be a more mischievous suggestion? The Aryans of India always used to keep Dharma before their eyes in all their spheres of life and consequently India obtained the high reputation of being the abode of eternal peace and happiness. The change that has come over the country today is simply unthinkable. How rapid has been her fall from that height of moral excellence, which, for centuries, had dominated the minds of its people. We, the descendants of the pious Aryans of Ancient India, do not now hesitate to banish Dharma from all our acts!

#### GOD-CENTRIC SYSTEM OF DUTIES

The Rishis of yore based all their teachings on Dharma, the underlying basis that supports or upholds a man in his struggle for his uplift, physical, mental and spiritual. It is nothing short of God-worship. The Rishis knew that all knowledge comes to him, who is a humble seeker of the knowledge of God—"The knowledge of God is the foundation of all knowledge." Their motto was: "Destroy Dharma and it will destroy you, preserve Dharma and it will preserve you." Keeping this motto in mind, they have bequeathed to us a God-centric system of duties that enables one, waking or dreaming,

to preserve Dharma and to keep God in the forefront of every act of one's life.

#### DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEN AND NOW

If, however, we do not care to follow the wise precepts inculcated by the sages, but in our inordinate pride and vanity, ignore them and thus bring disaster upon our homes, our Rishi-forefathers would not certainly be to blame for that. They have given us such a panacea for all the ills of life, that we, their ill-fated descendants, in spite of hundreds of cruel blows, have not succumbed to spiritual death, but even when dying, try to bring a new era of ideas into this world with renewed vigour and energy. As a result of having drunk deep of their spirituality, we, even in these degenerate days, are taught from our very childhood to look at woman as we would upon our own mother. Sitting as they did on the high pedestal of Dharma, the Rishis fully realized the grandeur of the conception of the motherhood of God and also of the motherhood of His image, the woman, and proclaimed to the world that woman, specially another's wife, should be looked upon as one's own mother. In order to create a deep-rooted habit of respect towards womankind, the Rishis understood that posterity should be brought up on this high ideal. With this view they taught people to address every woman in respectful and courteous terms, e.g. "Sister", "daughter", or "mother". But as the result of modern education, we have ceased to pay much heed to this precept, however excellent it is, or to the inherent good instincts of the heart; but pressing into our service all sorts of quibbling and fallacious arguments and specious reasonings of an indisciplined mind, we persuade ourselves into thinking that a

woman is after all nothing but a woman. We have lost the spectacles bequeathed to us by our forefathers, who taught us to see woman in the light of a mother.

#### WHY DOES DHARMA SOUND BITTER TO SOME?

It is only natural to us, the so-called educated Indians of the present time, that it should not be palatable to listen to religious precepts at every step or to link every act of our life with God-centric Dharma as our forefathers did. The reason is not very far to seek. We only seek ease and luxury; we have come to like too much frivolities of all sorts, and as its inevitable consequence, we go mad after physical beauty; we wish to excel in things which inflame our passions and naturally lead us to see woman in no other light than merely as a lump of flesh. To such people and to those of our countrymen who for want of foresight do not hesitate to introduce into India the maddening ball dance and similar other social customs of the West likely to bring moral famine in the East, it is needless to say, such advice to bring every act of life under the chastening and purifying control of God-centric moral injunctions would surely sound bitter; to them, the message of the motherhood of woman would no doubt sound harsh and out of tune in these disjointed times. Their motto is—"borrow money, eat hard, drink hard and be merry." Most of them do not find time to think even, to what immeasurable depth of ruin their country is gradually sinking by following their example and precepts. They want to live always in the dreamland of pleasures.

#### DHARMA ALWAYS LEADS TO GOOD

It is only fair to admit that many a well-wisher of the country is of opinion



that to remind a boy of Dharma and of the moral duties incidental to it in all acts of his life, is more than not likely to make him precociously wise or hypocritical. Labouring under this error of judgment, they fail to enter into the spirit of what the Rishis taught and without the slightest hesitation accept as gospel-truths many teachings of the West, that are plausible but injurious in their effect. We, on the other hand, unhesitatingly say that the effect of the rules for the conduct of life laid down by the Rishis, is to bring steadiness and gravity of character, but not precociousness; deep repentance for acts of impiety done, but certainly not hypocrisy. The Rishis have not placed any ban on innocent pleasures and amusements, they have not advised us to practise religious observances at the sacrifice of health, physical or mental. What they want to emphasize is that to enjoy all things conducive to morality and to hold fast to the God-centric Dharma can only lead to good and nothing but good.

#### HISTORY OF MANKIND BEARS TESTIMONY

The history of mankind bears ample testimony to this truth. Did Nero, Emperor of Rome, do good or immense mischief by his beastly anti-moral sexual indulgences and cruelties of the most inhuman kind? Who have done greater good than those high-souled saints who sacrificed their own precious lives in order to hold high the banner of the gospel of truth? How many Alcibiadeses succeeded in bringing about the revolution in the realm of thought that one Socrates could do by dint of his deep spiritual character? Which can be said to be the greater benefactor of mankind—the Puritans of England notwithstanding their bigotry, or the Stuart kings of England? There are

hundreds of men who can point with pride to the sublime and immortal verses of the puritan bard John Milton, as being the means of elevating their lives. But how many men there are who can boast of living highly cultured lives by following the doctrines of Brummel, the leader of fashion of his time? Did not the influence of George the Fourth sow seeds more of evil than of good in the social life of England? On the contrary, how much the morale of the English Society has been elevated and purified by the example of her ideal life of purity and morality set before her subjects by Queen Victoria? She, as sovereign of her people, maintained the purity of her court with the utmost strictness and rigour.

#### CONCLUSION

With all these examples before us, if one still refuses to believe in the good effect of Dharma, we do not know how to impress it on one's mind. It is, however, the bounden duty of every believer in God-centric Dharma, in religious and moral education as leading to all-round good, to instruct everyone to cultivate only those subjects that are interdependent on Dharma and to have every act of his interwoven with it, and not to remain apathetic in holding high the torch of Dharma. Its path is often very slippery, and it requires watchfulness and constant practice to stand steady in it. The sages of India have therefore enjoined upon us to practise Dharma like one in the grip of grim death. We, in conclusion, appeal to the sons of India to realize God as the centre of our life and thus allow Dharma to permeate all the acts of our life, physical or mental. It will then be possible for us, descendants of the hoary sages, to look upon the woman as upon our own mother, to carry the

message of motherhood to every hearth and home, not only in this country, but throughout the world, and thus put the crown of the highest glory and honour

on the head of our motherland, as the Rishis had done in the golden days of yore, and herald the advent of an age of enduring peace.

## THE UNIVERSITY OF PARIS PAYS TRIBUTE TO VIVEKANANDA

BY JEAN HERBERT

A few days after the successful celebration in Paris, in the Musée Guimet, of the centenary of Sri Ramakrishna, the "*Sorbonne*" paid a splendid tribute to Swami Vivekananda.

Under the chairmanship of Professor Fouché, member of the Institute of France, over 200 people assembled on March 30, 1936, in the auditorium of the "Institute of Indian Civilization" to hear a lecture by Professor Paul Masson-Oursel, and a few words by Miss Josephine MacLeod and Swami Yatiswarananda.

Professor Fouché opened the meeting by heartily welcoming Swami Vivekananda and his teachings into the great centre of learning. Dr. Eliot then informed the audience that those teachings would be studied by a group now in process of formation under the leadership of Swami Yatiswarananda. She also stated that the French translation of the four *Yogas* and also of *Inspired Talks* and various other works by Vivekananda would now be published in rapid succession ; she felt sure that the various volumes would meet with the same success as the first pamphlet which had already come out (*My Master*).

Professor Masson-Oursel, who holds the chair of Indian philosophy, chose as his subject "Vivekananda, the disciple of Ramakrishna". The following is a summary of his lecture, which was listened to with very keen interest.

"I should like first of all to express my great admiration for Romain Rolland's books, which made both Ramakrishna's and Vivekananda's names known in the West ; seldom has a Westerner shown such loving understanding of the East. But since those two great Bengalis were the first Indian religious teachers with whose experiences and doctrines Romain Rolland became acquainted, it was naturally difficult for him to realize all that they had in common with many great ancient, and possibly also contemporary, sages in India.

"Ramakrishna and Vivekananda are stars of the first magnitude in the sky of Indian spirituality, but it would be unfair to India and to Indian tradition to consider them as the only luminaries in that sky, nor would it add to their fame or influence ; they themselves would be the first to acknowledge gratefully all that they owed to the genius of their race and of mankind as a whole.

"Vivekananda should be studied only in conjunction with his master Ramakrishna. The contrast between the two men was striking. They belonged to two different castes. Whereas Ramakrishna was an ascetic, given to ecstasy, he was an athlete, proud of his physical vigour as well as of his great artistic talent which would have enabled him to become a remarkable professional musician. He was very keen to accumulate knowledge and wisdom, and became not only a Pandit, but also a man well-versed in Western science and art and culture. His religious ideas were at first the exact opposite of Ramakrishna's. He was rather sceptical, not at all sure that God did exist.

"His soul was content with a strict positivism, à la Auguste Comte ; he was a materialist. We may therefore place him in his youth as a very modern, and even modernizing Hindu. We must remember that in this he was no exception among the great thinkers of his country. Most of them have considered it essential that they should build up their own spirituality themselves and not take it ready-made from some

other man or school. And there is probably greater value and merit in the Indian idea that one can start from nothing and acquire a spiritual soul than in the Western idea that we have such a soul already and we cannot use it.

"He was a member of the Brâhmo-Samâj and read Spencer and Stuart Mill. He refused to choose between Indian and Western culture or to sacrifice either of them to the other. In that he was both a product and an opponent of Hindu prejudices.

"He was seventeen when he was brought to Ramakrishna, as a singer. There is little doubt that his musical training and capacities played a large part in preparing him for a life of spirituality.

"He first met Ramakrishna's ideas with flat contradiction. It is said that his conversion dates from the moment when the sage, intentionally, touched him with his foot. That decisive contact made the young man shed his negative and materialistic attitude. His Guru's influence, however, did not deter him from enquiring further into the West, and making his mind always richer. During his first journey to America and Europe, in 1893-95, he made a very sensational appearance in the "Parliament of Religions" in Chicago. In the U.S.A. he found the European mechanistic conception of life carried much further than in Europe, and always taking men further and further away from the plane on which the Indian world was still moving. He saw the effects of material science and of industrialization, which gave as violent a contrast with India as could be imagined. He had been well prepared however, and although he learnt much, he had no reason to be surprised.

"When in England, he felt no political bitterness. What opposes man to man never had any appeal for him. In British public opinion he rather saw a possible instrument for propaganda in favour of India. And perhaps that happened to be a wise and fruitful policy, politically.

"On the way back, coming through Europe, he met Max Müller and Deussen. He landed in Colombo in 1897, and he set to work to build up the Ramakrishna Mission. He had already toured India as a youth. Now he toured his country as a man and a prophet. In 1897 he even made Western disciples in India.

"His earthly life ended with grandeur. Not only did he know the appointed time, he also felt a moral obligation to die. And we may probably say that he passed away of his own accord, in that state of Samâdhi, or ecstasy, which his Guru had so passionately loved. His death was no common death, and cannot be accounted for by any particular human reason. He freed himself from the bonds of human life when he had learned all that he had to learn, when he had achieved all that he had to do.

"We can understand Vivekananda only if we know Ramakrishna. The Guru had taken his *raison de vivre* from the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*. One man had wanted to walk in one life the full length of each of the four paths which the *Gîtâ* says lead to liberation. And as if it were not enough to live to their end each of the four yogas, Ramakrishna had also wanted to live each one of the various religions known in his country. By that he did not mean simply to become an adept of each, but actually to re-live the life of the great prophets. He became not a Moslem, but Mohammad himself, not a Christian, but Jesus himself, just as he became Kâli and Râma and Krishna and all the other forms which the Absolute has taken in the Indian world.

"That experience cannot possibly be judged or appreciated from our plane of life and thought. Unless Ramakrishna was only a visionary given to ecstasy, we may say of him not only what was said of Spinoza, that he was intoxicated with God, but that he was the God who was both the basis and the goal of his religious experience.

"What did that leave for a disciple to do? First of all to follow in the footsteps of the master and go through his experiences. Vivekananda was the perfect disciple. We do not know whether he actually reached the point which Ramakrishna had attained, but even if he had, that would only make him a second Ramakrishna, it would not make him original. He made, however, a new and personal contribution in his conception of Dharma.

"Although that one word corresponds to our various notions of religion, right, duty, and many others, it does not mean that the Hindus do not distinguish between those notions; it means rather that they also have an idea which we do not have, and which cuts across, so to speak, all those concepts. The idea is that there are various deep

strata which it is in nobody's power to create, but of which we should sometimes point out the urgent necessity. That faith in the Dharma has existed ever since Vedic times, and it is quite commonplace.

"Another idea which is very common in India is that spirituality is the essence and the basis of all that we call civilization, politics, &c., which should flow from it quite naturally and healthily. Vivekananda's personal experience was to realize that although he alone could not solve all the riddles of India, the task could be accomplished if he took as a basis Ramakrishna's religious experience, which he had shared to a certain extent. Had it not been for Ramakrishna's manifold "*Erlebnis*", Vivekananda could only have been one of those modern-minded Hindus such as we meet in Paris and an artist into the bargain.

"Vivekananda's work was twofold: he was to advocate in his country all that could usefully be borrowed from the West, and also something more which we shall see later,— he was also to reveal to the West that if we do not want to fall back into barbarism, we should not lose all touch with spiritual life.

"To Western audiences, there was no special difficulty or merit in advocating Indian ideas and ideals, but where Vivekananda showed great courage and originality was in the fact that he defended not only Sankara (for whom Spinoza had stood already) but also Kâli, and the Tantric rites and all the rest. He did not educate Hindu religious creeds and turn them into a rationalized concept for the benefit of Western minds, he claimed to be as modern and up-to-date when worshipping Kâli as any American architect when building a sky-scraper.

"In India he did not only uphold the utilitarian advantages of physics and chemistry and the other sciences. He also advocated the betterment of material conditions, the elimination of poverty, famine, &c., and showed that such improvements, far from impeding spiritual progress, should further it. He fearlessly told his people to "get rich" and he believed that by doing so he was serving his country.

"He was convinced that all religions are equivalent. Ramakrishna was the only man who had a right to say that, because he knew it through a full and personal experience of every one of them, and therefore his disciple did not defend that ideological syncretism which without Ramakrishna's experience would have been devoid of all value. Similarly Vivekananda could and did say: we must all be brothers, but let us keep our differences; just as Ramakrishna had been able to live religions which are different.

"When Vivekananda proudly claimed his Aryan origin, Mongolian blood, and a negroid element which was in him, he meant that he had *lived* the negro, and the Indo-European and the Mongolian, just as Ramakrishna had lived Krishna and Jesus, and Mohammad, and that he did not deny any of them.

"Although Vivekananda followed the four Yogas, he was mostly a Karma yogin. He claimed to be an adept of the most monistic form of Vedânta. For us, that is only one of many metaphysical systems, and many great exponents of it have nevertheless belonged to some particular religious cult or other. But for Vivekananda the Vedânta had become also a social and political activity. What is important for him is Unity, that unity of mankind is far more valuable with all the differences that exist than when robbed of them. His Vedânta is therefore without Mâyâ, he has made it a means for social action. What he values in monism is its catholicity. In social thought and action, the Vedânta has been for Vivekananda what art has been for the Tagores.

"From the point of view of sheer ideas, Vivekananda without Ramakrishna would have been nothing but a propounder of what was already known; backed by the experience of Ramakrishna, which he extended and broadened, he became a prophet.

"From a practical point of view, he spread horizontally what in Ramakrishna was remarkable by its depth. Instead of seeing spirituality in renunciation, he saw it in brotherly love."

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Miss Josephine MacLeod then gave, in French, a few reminiscences of her meeting in America in 1895 with Swami Vivekananda.

Swami Yatiswarananda, clad in the garb of the Order, then addressed the audience:

"Sisters and Brothers, I look upon it as a great privilege to be present here in this great centre of learning and culture, and to take part in the celebration organized in

connection with the birth-centenary of Sri Ramakrishna. And I take this opportunity to offer you all heartiest greetings on behalf of myself and of the Brotherhood I have the honour to represent.

"I come to you not as a stranger, but as one who, following the teachings of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, believes in the exchange and assimilation of the best in the culture of the East and of the West, as one who feels a kinship with those whose hearts beat to the spiritual tune and yearn after the realization of the Truth which is neither Eastern nor Western but is the goal of us all.

"I did not have the privilege of meeting Vivekananda. In 1906, four years after the Swami's passing away, both Ramakrishna and Vivekananda came to me at the same time, in the form of their teachings, when I was a student at the University. The first books that brought me the message were "*The Gospel of Ramakrishna*" and Vivekananda's "*Rajā-Yoga*". I became more and more interested in the literature; later I came in touch with the monks of the Order which I finally joined a few years afterwards.

"It was my good fortune to receive spiritual instruction from Swami Brahmananda, the "spiritual son" of Ramakrishna, and also to know intimately many of Ramakrishna's other great disciples. I carry on my head also the blessings of the Holy Mother, the partner of Ramakrishna's divine realization and glory.

"Sri Ramakrishna was a great gardener who reared many flowers of the rarest kinds and gathered them all in his basket. Vivekananda was certainly the greatest of them all but there were others also who were unique in their own way. Sitting at the feet of many of those great ones, this is what I have learnt—that Ramakrishna and Vivekananda were not separate entities. They were, really speaking, a twofold manifestation of the same Divine Principle and Power.

"Ramakrishna was like the silent cloud that gathers the storm and Vivekananda was like the thundering cloud that spreads it all around. It is impossible to separate the two. In Ramakrishna, the ancient ideals of Vedānta realized themselves in a silent and quiet way. In Vivekananda they became more dynamic and widespread. It was he who spread the message in India and carried it to Western lands.

"The mighty spiritual current that had its origin in the quiet temple of Dakshineswar on the banks of the Ganges inundated the whole of India through Vivekananda and has brought a new inspiration and awakening to the country, stimulating the spiritual life of people and urging them to serve their fellow-men more than ever.

"In order to understand the message of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, we must take a synthetic view and acknowledge that it is not enough for us to realize spirituality in individual life. The Divine whom we try to realize within us as the Soul of our soul must also be realized in the collective life through creative service. We must try to promote our individual well-being and at the same time to work for the good of others.

"We live in a world where people want to be saviours to others without knowing how to save themselves. Ramakrishna and Vivekananda teach us that we must first of all learn how to help ourselves, and then alone may we be able to help others. The message, to put it briefly, is this:—First, let us ourselves be divine, and then help others to be divine."

## ATMABODHA

BY SWAMI SIDDHATMANANDA

(Continued from the May issue)

रगेच्छासुखदुःखादि बुद्धौ सत्यां प्रवर्तते ।

सुषुप्तौ नास्ति तन्नाशे तस्माद्बुद्धेस्तु नात्मनः ॥ २३ ॥

रगेच्छासुखदुःखादि Attachment, desire, pleasure, pain, etc. बुद्धौ सत्यां when the mind exists प्रवर्तते arise; सुषुप्तौ तन्नाशे नास्ति (Attachment etc.) do not exist in dreamless sleep the mind then being destroyed तन्नाशे therefore बुद्धेस्तु (the attachment etc.) belong to the mind न चात्मनः not to the Atman.

23. Attachment, desire, pleasure, pain, etc. arise when the mind exists i.e., exist only in the waking and dream state; they do not exist in dreamless sleep, the mind being then absent; so they belong to the mind and not to the Âtman.

प्रकाशोऽर्कस्य तोयस्य शैत्यमग्नेर्यथोष्णता ।

स्वभावः सच्चिदानन्दनित्यनिर्मलतात्मनः ॥ २४ ॥

यथा As अर्कस्य of the sun प्रकाशः light तोयस्य of the water शैत्यम् cold अग्नेः of the fire उष्णता heat स्वभावः characteristic feature ( तथा so ) सच्चिदानन्द existence, intelligence, bliss नित्यनिर्मलता eternal purity आत्मनः of the Self ( स्वभावः real nature ).

24. Existence, intelligence, bliss, and eternal purity are the essential nature of the Âtman as light, cold, and heat are of the sun, water, and fire respectively.

आत्मनः सच्चिदंशश्च बुद्धेर्वृत्तिरिति द्वयम् ।

संयोज्य चाविवेकेन जानामीति प्रवर्तते ॥ २५ ॥

( जीवः Jiva ) आत्मनः सच्चिदंशः existence and consciousness of the Self बुद्धेर्वृत्तिः च and the functions of the mind इति द्वयम् these two संयोज्य combining together चाविवेकेन through want of discrimination च expletive ( अहं ) जानामि इति प्रवर्तते acts as the cognizer.

25. Through want of discrimination Jiva combining these two—the existence-intelligence of the Self and the functions of the mind acts as the cognizer.

आत्मनो विक्रिया नास्ति बुद्धेर्बोधो न जात्वपि ।

जीवः सर्वमलं ज्ञाता कर्ता द्रष्टेति मुह्यति ॥ २६ ॥

जातं At any time अपि expletive आत्मनः of the Self विक्रिया न ( अस्ति ) there is no modification बुद्धेः बोधः न ( अस्ति ) the mind has no consciousness (of its own); जीवः सर्वम् अवलम् verily Jiva itself (acts as) all of these ज्ञाता experiencer (of pleasure and pain) कर्ता doer द्रष्टा seer इति मुह्यति gets deluded (as these).

26. Neither the Âtman ever undergoes any modification nor has the mind ever any consciousness of its own; verily, Jiva itself, under delusion, acts as all of these—experiencer (of pleasure and pain) doer and seer.

रज्जुसर्पवदात्मानं जीवं ज्ञात्वा भयं वहेत् ।

नाहं जीवः परात्मेति ज्ञातश्चेन्निर्मयो भवेत् ॥ २७ ॥

रज्जुसर्पवत् As a rope is mistaken for a snake आत्मानं जीवं ज्ञात्वा regarding oneself as Jiva भयं वहेत् (one) suffers from fear; न अहं जीवः I am not Jiva (अहं) परात्मा I am the Supreme Self इति ज्ञातः चेत् if known thus निर्भयः भवेत् (one) becomes free from all fears.

27. A man suffers from fear, mistaking himself as Jiva as a rope is mistaken for a snake ; he becomes free from all fears if he can know that he is not Jiva but he is the Supreme Self.

आत्मावभासयत्येको बुद्ध्यादीनीन्द्रियाणि च ।

दीपो घटादिवत् स्वात्मा जडैस्तेनैवभास्यते ॥ २८ ॥

दीपः घटादिवत् Like a lamp illumining jars etc. एकः alone आत्मा Ātman बुद्ध्यादीनि the intellect etc. इन्द्रियाणि च and the senses अवभासयति illuminates ; स आत्मा the Ātman Itself जडैः तैः (बुद्ध्यादीनीन्द्रियैः) by the intellect etc. and the senses which have no consciousness न अवभास्यते cannot be enlightened.

28. Like a lamp illumining jars etc., the Ātman alone illumines the intellect etc. and the senses ; the Ātman cannot be revealed by them as they have no consciousness ( just as a lamp cannot be illumined by jars etc. ).

स्वबोधे नान्यबोधेच्छा बोधरूपतयात्मनः ।

न दीपस्यान्यदीपेच्छा यथा स्वात्मप्रकाशने ॥ २९ ॥

यथा As स्वात्मप्रकाशने for revealing itself दीपस्य अन्यदीपेच्छा न ( भवति ) a lamp does not require the help of another lamp ( तथा so ) आत्मनः बोधरूपतया consciousness being the essential nature of the Ātman स्वबोधे for revealing Itself अन्यबोधेच्छा न ( भवति ) does not require any other knowledge.

29. As a lamp does not require the help of another lamp to reveal itself so the Ātman whose essential nature is consciousness does not require any other knowledge for revealing Itself.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

The opening article is an unpublished writing of Swami Vivekananda. . . . In the last two issues we have discussed some ideals of education which are suited to the conditions of India. In this month we deal with *The Education of the Masses in India* and offer some suggestions for the uplift of the teeming millions in India. . . . The article

on *Hinduism and Buddhism* by Prof. Dr. H. V. Glasenapp was originally written in German and contributed to a German magazine. It deals with the subject philosophically and historically, hence it may be of interest to our readers. . . . *A Luminous Soul of India* is a speech which Dr. Frederick B. Robinson, President of the College of the City of New York, delivered on

the occasion of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Celebration, held last March in the New York Town Hall. . . . In *The Religion We are born in* Prof. Shrivastava discusses some fundamental points of religion and religious life as viewed by all mystics, teachers, and prophets of the world. . . . Prof. Nicholas de Roerich makes some valuable observations in connection with the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Celebrations in his *Heavenly Gifts*. . . . Swami Jagadiswarananda makes a detailed study of the Hindu influences in the past and in the present in *Hinduism in Burma*. . . . *The Message of Motherhood* is from the pen of Mr. Kshitindra Nath Tagore, who criticizes the modern attitude towards women. . . . Mr. Jean Herbert, who is now translating Swami Vivekananda's works into French, gives us an account of how *The University of Paris pays tribute to Vivekananda*.

#### HARKING BACK TO PAST

It is a paradox of history that man never rests at any point of the historical process and yet he never ceases to cast wistful glances at an idyllic past. And the while he believes he is reviving the past he is, in fact, moving away from it. Whether the process is one of steady progress, or a gradual *untergang* or a vicious movement in a circle man has always been swept off his feet by the inevitable flux. The forward step, if it avoids old ills and solves old problems, brings in its train new ones. In course of time the present misery becomes unbearable and seems almost inescapable, and man tries to cry a halt to the movement and longs to return to the past undisturbed by the nightmares of the present. We are witnessing a similar case in those who seem to be sick with an industrialism that

threatens Frankenstein-like to destroy its creators and who would fain return to the days of the eighteenth century village economy. It is a profound fallacy. We do not mean that progress is to be measured by *taklis* or by spinning jennies. We are not taking so cramped a view. If there be such a thing called progress taking a comprehensive view of civilization it obviously lies elsewhere.

What is pertinent to the question is a distinction of the things of permanent and of changing values and a tracking down of the root of the evil. Certain values are permanent for human society. Such are certain moral, aesthetic, and spiritual values which will endure to the last days of humanity. Along with them there are ideas and objects which embody only fleeting values. They are more or less accidental, being products of changing needs and circumstances. It is futile to attempt to arrest their mutability. It is idle to suppose that the historical urge can be stopped or that man's spirit of innovation and enterprise can be extinguished. Besides, it is usually the case to contrast the ills of a present system with the benefits of a past one while forgetting the merits of the former and the drawbacks of the latter. Much of the charm for the past would melt away if it could be envisaged in its totality. Most of our fascination for the past feeds upon our failure in historical imagination. What again is to blame — man or his creation? Are unemployment and misery inevitable accompaniments of the machine? Is not what is necessary only a new adjustment? The selfish greed of a few is exploiting a system that is capable of alleviating human want and misery to a considerable extent. It is no good blaming institutions which can be worked both ways. The Gandhites condemn machine



as the cause of unemployment and spiritual degeneration, the Marxists call religion the opium of the people. What is the truth, Pilate?—ask the bewildered. Nothing captures our imagination more than forest glades, thatched huts and mountain springs, but we believe the world is peopled with men and men. Happily or unhappily India is a modern country by the grace of time and space. She can hardly ignore the happenings round her. While the cottage industry has immense potentialities for the present in Indian economy it is unwise and fatal to decry and retard the industrialization of the country.

#### RELIGION AND MORALITY

There are discernible in the present thought-texture of the world two strands which almost run counter to each other. On the one hand there is an ever-growing tendency to accept nothing that is not revealed by a diligent search after truth; on the other an ever-increasing emphasis is being laid on ethical and religious values regarding which all questions of truth and falsehood are held to be strictly impertinent. The last century ushered into being a new science called axiology which started a systematic enquiry into the nature and problem of value. It is now held that our sense of the good, the beautiful, and the true is arrived at by way of a judgment of value and that it is irrelevant to enquire into their truth or falsehood. They are held to be fundamental. Values are thus shown to be valueless. Thus morality has no other sanction beyond its own 'imperatives'. Another thing noticeable in such discussions is the fairly common confusion of religious and moral values. Morality is held to be the essence of religion, and at

times religion has been identified with social morality.

Such are the results of a sense-bound intellectualism which fails to penetrate the husk of Reality. It is cold comfort to learn that morality has no superior sanction and that religion is more or less a got-up affair to fortify the moral inclinations of the individual, a shadowy prop to social ethics. It is difficult to imagine how such an obviously shaky position can be maintained for long. Even granting that as social good ensures individual good, the individual will be inclined to respect social morality, how can such a conception inspire men with enthusiasm to do more than what is strictly necessary and to bridge the difference between society and society, nation and nation, race and race? It is a confession of intellectual failure to understand religion. Religion is more than morality. It is true moral discipline is an indispensable pre-condition of religious life, and religious experience issues out into finest moral sentiments and behaviour, yet religion is neither moral nor non-moral. It is amoral in its highest flights. Religion ends in mysticism which affords an insight into the heart of Reality that transcends all moral and non-moral aspects of the world. But while the vision of unity transcends all these bounds, it at the same time affords the true basis of all morality. It shows that man must rise ever higher and higher in moral behaviour to reach the core of truth. Morality is an expression of the underlying oneness. The nobler it is, the more finely does it reflect the Truth. Here then is the sanction of morality. Religion gives meaning to ethics; it alone can sustain moral endeavour. Without a living faith in a spiritual principle it is as vain to lead a moral life as it is profitless to build hopes on sand.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI.** By Sister Devamata. *Ananda Ashrama, La Crescenta, Los Angeles County, California. Pp. 88.*

The quest after Spirit has made the author a wanderer all her life. She has travelled to numerous sacred places and bowed at different holy shrines. Among her pilgrimages two stand out pre-eminently in her memory. The most vivid one is her visit to Dakshineswar and a few other near-by places connected with the life of Ramakrishna; the other is her sojourn at Assisi, the native place of St. Francis. She weaves these two memories into one in the present work. It is no biography of the saints, nor any comparative estimate, for she humbly disavows any "thought of comparison in putting these two Great Ones side by side". She has loved them both, and she believes that those who love the one will learn to love the other and thus a new link would be forged between the East and the West. She contents herself by merely pointing to their great similarities in life, method, mission, message and teachings and also a few differences between them, imposed by difference in time, country, and traditions. Of the Italian saint she says: "Had Francis been born in India instead of in Italy, he would have been acclaimed a Divine Manifestation. No being ever embodied more perfectly in both life and character the Christ-Spirit or the Christ-Ideal that did Francis. The stigmata set their seal on his Christhood."

**TALES FROM THE MYSTICS OF THE EAST.** By General Parakram Jung Bahadur Rana, *Kitabistan, Allahabad. Pp. 133. Price Rs. 2-8.*

This excellently got-up volume has strung together some fifty anecdotes from the lives of the various mystics of the East, all of which reveal the common view-point of mystics. An intense yearning for God and a burning spirit of renunciation shine out from the tales garnered from the stories of saints widely separated in time and clime such as Janak, Kabir, Nanak, Mira, Jaidev, Bahlol, Shamash, Hasan, Shibli, Sanjir, Bayazid, Attar, and a few others. The

mystics know not only how to love God with a flaming passion but also how to express their love in exquisite expressions. Words leap from their mouth with the easy grace and spontaneity of water spouting out of fountain-heads in delicate showers. There are passages in the book, which are sure to captivate the reader by sheer literary charm apart from their mystical appeal. Said Imam Hasan to his father when the latter had confessed to her multiple affections. "Father, is it a heart that you possess or a traveller's home that shelters so many affections. The heart is one and it can accommodate only one." A mystic's heart has no room for harbouring any affection other than that of God. All the tales ring with the same note.

**THE STORY OF MIRABAI.** By Bankey Behari, B.Sc., LL.B. *Published by the Gita Press, Gorakhpur. Pp. 96. Price As. 10.*

The story of Mira Bai forms one of the most fascinating chapters in the history of saints. Buddha's renunciation has usurped popular imagination, but compared with Mira's it pales into insignificance. Born in the ruling family of Marwar and married to the heir-apparent of the proudest royal family of Rajasthan, she spurned the princely pomp and magnificence, patiently bore all the humiliations heaped upon her and wandered alone to Brindaban for the sake of her beloved Lord. Legends have shrouded her figure in mystery, but the melody and the poignant pathos of her devotional songs have made immortal and kept vivid the intense charm of her personality. It is a pity that such a theme has fared no better treatment than the one we have here. True, the author is out to relate Mira's story not history. Nevertheless what one gets here is fairly common knowledge easily picked up from hearsay in India. The information that is spread over some odd ninety pages could have been easily crammed in half a dozen, the rest being the author's none too happy philosophizations. Readers who delight in ruminating on sentimental outbursts may derive some interest from the work, but one who thirsts for intimate acquaintance with one of the most remarkable saintly characters in history will be

sadly disappointed. The book is got-up well and illustrated with a number of coloured pictures.

**KALYĀN KALPATARU. VEDĀNTA NUMBER, JANUARY, 1936.** *Printed and published by Ghanshyamdas at the Gita Press, Gorakhpur. Pp. 248. Price Rs. 2-8-0.*

The Gita Press has once more earned the gratitude of the public by bringing out this excellent symposium on Vedānta. No less than fifty-seven contributions on various aspects of Vedānta, some from the pens of eminent scholars, are contained in it. Some offer illuminating comments on various aspects of Vedānta. It is chiefly concerned with the different phases of the non-dualistic (Ādvaita) philosophy, though other systems have received some attention. Deserving of individual mention are, Bhagavan Sri Sankaracharya on God, Soul, and the Universe

by Sri Sankaracharya of Govardhan Mutt, Puri ; Sri Ramanuja and his system of Philosophy by Sankaracharya of Conjeeveram ; The methods of Vedic knowledge by Aurobindo ; Misconceptions regarding Sankara Vedānta by Mahamahopadhyaya Ganganath Jha ; On Waking and Dreaming Worlds in Sankara Vedānta by Pandit Kokileswar Shastri ; Misconceptions about Vedānta by Basanta Kumar Chatterjee ; Sivoham by Principal Sheshadri ; Sankaracharya's Analysis of Experience by Prof. S. V. Dandekar ; Tantra and Vedānta by Prof. Chintaharan Chakravarti ; Vedantic Truth by late Atal Bihari Ghosh. There are two articles on Nimbarka philosophy and on the life and philosophy of Vallabhacharya. Several passages from scriptures and Sankara are appended at the end. The magazine merits a permanent place in any philosophical shelf.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### SRI RAMAKRISHNA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

#### PROVIDENCE

The Providence Birthday Celebration of Sri Ramakrishna was opened early on the 21st February last at 7-30 A.M. over the radio when Swami Akhilananda, speaking for the Ministers' Morning Devotions, gave a talk on the Spiritual Experiences of Sri Ramakrishna. That afternoon at 3, the Swami, speaking over a different radio station, read to the invisible public the message of Swami Vivekananda on Sri Ramakrishna, and spoke on Sri Ramakrishna and Future Civilization.

A Committee called the American Centenary Celebration of Sri Ramakrishna had been formed during the winter. It comprised, besides the American Swamis, of such outstanding figures as Professor William E. Hocking of Harvard University, Rev. Ivan Lee Holt, President of the Federation of Churches of Christ, Rev. Frederick B. Fisher, President of the Council of Free Churches of America, Rev. Jabez Sunderland, Professor Franklin Edgerton, Head of the American Oriental Society, Professor Millar Burrows, President of the American School of Oriental Research, Rabbi Israel Lazaron and others. The chairman of this

Publicity Committee, Rev. Frederick A. Wilmot, Universalist Minister and Religious Editor of the Providence Journal, wrote three appreciative articles on Sri Ramakrishna portraying him vividly to the Western mind.

On Sunday, February 23, a large gathering of about 300 came together at the Plantations Club, a big auditorium in the centre of Providence, to hear ministers of different religions speak on mysticism. An unusual spirit of harmony and goodwill toward one another and toward Sri Ramakrishna could be noticed among the ministers. After a short violin recital by the expert technician, Professor Henri J. Faucher accompanied by Mme. Marie B. Faucher, Swami Akhilananda opened the meeting by reading to all the message of good cheer from Swami Akhandanandaji. A Catholic monk, Father Chandler, struck a high spiritual note by his beautiful exposition of the stages of divine love as portrayed in the life of St. Thomas Aquinas showing the attainment of God to be the highest human goal. This was followed by a very interesting account by Rabbi Braude of the charitable life of Rabbi Israel, the Master of Goodname. Rev. Ralph Harpole depicted practical mysticism in the Protestant

Church from the life of Horace Bushnell. An entertaining note was then brought in by Rev. Frederick A. Wilmot's definition of mysticism, which he followed by a talk on Sri Ramakrishna bringing out with sympathetic understanding the idea of the harmony of religions. Swami Akhilananda then spoke on the mysticism of Sri Ramakrishna stressing the fact that man must experience or realize God before he can become truly religious. The subject was drawn to a fitting close by Dr. Joachim Wach, formerly of Leipzig University and now Professor of Comparative Religions at Brown University, speaking on the Unity of Eastern and Western Mysticism, when he remarked that "mysticism denoted the harmony of man above his national and social barriers."

The glorious birthday was spent in worship according to Hindu rights.

The following day, the message of Swami Akhandanandaji, the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, India, was broadcast by the Press on the radio over the whole of the United States. There were brief addresses on various phases of the life of Sri Ramakrishna by the five Swamis present and a few prominent American friends. Swami Akhilananda opened by giving the early life and spiritual background of Sri Ramakrishna. Swami Paramananda continued by telling of the Master and other Religions. Here Rev. Frederick A. Wilmot spoke a few words on Sri Ramakrishna's Influence on the West, which was followed by a discussion of His Practical Teachings by Swami Vividishananda. The points of Sri Ramakrishna's Contribution to the Christian World were noted by Rev. Allen E. Claxton, Methodist minister, in a very clear, deep talk showing much careful thought and was appreciated by all. Swami Nikhilananda told in an interesting way about the Master and His Disciples. This was followed with a few brief words by Professor Robert Casey, Professor of Comparative Religions at Brown University, on Eclecticism and Exclusiveness in mysticism and a word of appreciation of the Philosophy of Sri Ramakrishna by Professor Arthur Murphy, Professor of Comparative Philosophy at Brown University. Swami Gnaneshwarananda ended with a quick, lively little story bringing out the different temperaments of religious aspirants in the East and the West and left with the

company a thought tersely and strikingly expressed that, "Sri Ramakrishna is Power," and "It Works"—that this power works for us in every phase of life; after which he gave a little Hindu music.

On Wednesday Swami Akhilananda again read the message of Swami Akhandanandaji over the radio and gave a talk on Sri Ramakrishna. In the evening a gathering of friends enjoyed more music by Swami Gnaneshwarananda interspersed with informal discussion and refreshments.

Harmony of Religions was the topic of Swami Akhilananda over the radio on Friday, February 28. In the evening there was another large public meeting at the Plantations Club. This time, four Swamis delivered lectures on Sri Ramakrishna and His Influence which did much to spread acquaintance among the public. After Swami Akhilananda opened the meeting, Swami Paramananda, speaking first, told about Sri Ramakrishna, the Great Master of India. Swami Vividishananda stressed the Harmony of Religions as shown by the life of Sri Ramakrishna. That a combination of mysticism and practical qualities is not only possible but admirable was brought out interestingly and clearly by Swami Gnaneshwarananda. While, by Swami Akhilananda, Western Psychology and Mystic Experiences were set over against each other and given their relative values illustrated from the sublime life of Sri Ramakrishna.

The week of celebration proper ended on Sunday, March 1st. At a meeting in the evening, after a little violin music again by Professor Henri J. Faucher accompanied by Mme. Marie B. Faucher and vocal music by Miss Ruth Webber accompanied by Mrs. Curry, Swami Akhilananda gave a lecture on India and Her Master illustrated by slides that made the members of the audience desire immediately to leave for India with the Swami in a large party.

The two regular lecture nights of the following week were devoted to questions on Sri Ramakrishna, which brought out many interesting points and angles of vision new to the West. Then, on Sunday, Swami Akhilananda lectured on Sri Ramakrishna and Modern Problems.

The celebration was thereafter carried to Philadelphia and to St. Louis by Swami Akhilananda where, in both places, he delivered a number of special lectures on Sri

Ramakrishna, which interested and drew many people.

### MEETING AT THE BROOKLYN INSTITUTE

On the 18th April last, Swami Nikhila-nanda and Mr. Dhan Gopal Mukerji were invited to address a meeting of the Institute of Arts and Sciences in the Brooklyn Academy of Music in further celebration of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary. Mr. Stansbury Hagar, Vice-president of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center and one of the directors of the Institute, introduced the speakers to the members and guests who filled the large hall. Swami Nikhila-nanda gave an account of the childhood of Sri Ramakrishna, of his more and more introspective approach to life during his youth, and of the period of burning spiritual zeal and highest realization at the Temple of Dakshineswar. In the various episodes of his Sādhana, the Swami emphasized Sri Ramakrishna's innate purity and complete self-surrender at the feet of God, which finally enabled him to illumine the hearts of his disciples and lead them to the great monastic ideal of renunciation and service. This ideal led to the subsequent founding of the Ramakrishna Mission, which was to be of such far-reaching importance in bringing the East and West together. The philosophical significance of Sri Ramakrishna's teachings was presented to the public in clear outline in the latter half of the Swami's address. He laid stress on Sri Ramakrishna's loving and intimate relationship with God, which has made Him accessible to us all: his recognition of God as being both with form and without form; the relation of God to man, and the four cardinal points of Sri Ramakrishna's teachings: the Oneness of Existence, Divinity of Man, Unity of God and Harmony of Religions. The response of the audience to the message of the Master was immediate and enthusiastic.

Mr. Dhan Gopal Mukerji, following the Swami, related many beautiful and interesting reminiscences from the lives of the Holy Mother, Girish Chandra Ghose, and Swami Turiyananda, to illustrate the power of Sri Ramakrishna in transforming the lives of his disciples. He showed how the Holy Mother, who had spent the days of her pure and simple childhood in a small village, became the virtual head of the monastic order of the Ramakrishna Mission as a result of the exqui-

site and painstaking training given to her by Sri Ramakrishna from the first day that she came to join in his life of spiritual dedication. He told of how even a man of the world like Girish Ghose became one of the most holy and illumined saints of his time, one whose talents as a dramatist were to be an inspiration to millions of Hindus in the field of religion, through the influence of the Master. And finally Mr. Mukerji described Swami Turiyananda's tremendous austerities, his complete conquest over the ailments and sufferings of the body and his high state of realization.

It was felt that a new field of interest had opened up for those who had the good fortune to attend the Centenary meeting at the Brooklyn Institute.

### PORTLAND, OREGON

The Centenary celebration of Sri Ramakrishna was opened on the 28th March last, at 8-30 P.M., with the presentation of a playlet called, "The Light from The Beyond," in the Commandery Room of the Masonic Temple, before an enthusiastic and respectable gathering of more than three hundred people. The play, in two Acts and three Tableaux of the goddess Saraswati, Mohammed and Madonna, was adapted by Swami Devatmananda, from the Life and Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. This sublime subject was presented in the picturesque and colourful setting of oriental costumes and religious chants. In the first Act Girish Chandra Ghosh, the poet and dramatist, described how his life was transformed by Sri Ramakrishna. It was then followed by expositions of such subjects as, 'How to Live in the World,' 'Hope for the Imperfect One,' 'Sin and Worship of Fear,' 'Image Worship,' 'Harmony of Religions,' etc., by Sri Ramakrishna. The climax of the play was reached in the last Act, in which the various pilgrims, the Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, and Mohammedans, met at the Altar of Truth, chanting their respective prayers, and singing the chorus, "Truth is One, In Unity we meet, etc., Together God's children, worship at His Feet. The Pure in Heart shall see God, for Truth is One." (Adpt: Beethoven, Op. 13) composed for the occasion. As they all laid their offerings on the Altar and with a happy heart sang and mingled together, demonstrating that Truth is One. Sri Ramakrishna standing beneath the Light of Truth, looked on with a smile of gladsome approval, and the right hand raised in way

of benediction. Miss Frances Pozzi of the Portland Symphony Orchestra, presented several numbers on the Harp.

On Sunday, March 29, at 11 o'clock in the morning, a devotional Service was held, in the Chapel of the Vedic Temple, 1206 N.W. 25th Ave., when Swami Devatmananda addressed the full hall on "Sri Ramakrishna, the God-Man". It was preceded by a period of silent meditation and appropriate musical programme.

At 6-30 P.M., a banquet was held in the Banquet Hall of the Masonic Temple, when Hindu dinner was served to more than hundred people. The Memorial meeting was promptly started at 7-45 P.M., when more people began crowding in the hall. The Toast Master, Mr. Ralph Thom, of the Bank of California, called the meeting to order with a few appropriate words explaining the purpose of the gathering. He then introduced Dr. Norman F. Coleman, ex-President of Reed College, who spoke eloquently on "Our Debt to India". Dr. G. B. Noble, of the same college, then spoke on "A Western View of Sri Ramakrishna". Swami Devatmananda was finally called upon to address the gathering. He spoke on "Sri Ramakrishna, and God-Intoxication". The talks were interspersed with musical numbers, vocal and instrumental both, presented by noted artists. Floral offerings, including one hundred red roses, added charm and grace to the place; and a large painting of Sri Ramakrishna prominently displayed was the centre of attraction.

On Sunday, April 5, at 11 o'clock in the morning, the regular service was held in the Chapel of the Vedic Temple, when Swami Devatmananda spoke on "Sri Ramakrishna, His Spiritual Practices". A special feature of the musical programme was a song composed for the occasion and dedicated to Sri Ramakrishna. In the evening, at 8 o'clock, the Swami gave an illustrated talk in the Corinthian Room of the Masonic Temple on "The History of the Hindu Religion in Pictures," with the help of lantern slides. This graphic and thrilling presentation was immensely enjoyed by the whole audience that filled the hall.

#### CHICAGO

The Vedanta Society of Chicago commenced the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Celebration on the 1st of February last. Its book-table welcomed the appearance of its

centenary publication, "Ramakrishna the Man and the Power". Hundreds of copies of the book were either presented or sold to friends of the various Vedanta Societies, all over the United States. Next followed the publication of a series of newspaper articles announcing the significance of this world-wide celebration, giving special publicity to its programme in the foremost evening paper of Chicago, which attracted the notice of many Chicagoans to the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Celebration of the Society. The visiting Swamis arrived one after another with their friends.

Friday, March 20, witnessed the function of the celebration—Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Banquet.

The number of reservations rose higher than was originally expected. Consequently the banquet was switched from the Tropical Room of the Medinah Club to the Grand Ball Room of the same building. The beautiful banquet hall with sumptuous floral decorations and festive candles on every table presented a gorgeous sight. Gradually the hall was filled with nearly two hundred guests. The speakers' table was tastefully placed on a raised platform in front of a huge mirror. Dr. Lake, the toastmaster, with his lady; Dr. Scherger and his wife; Dr. Preston Bradley; and also the Swamis Paramananda, Akhilananda, Nikhilananda, Vividishananda and Gnaneshwarananda in their orange coloured robes occupied their allotted seats at the speakers' table, which commanded an atmosphere of awe and reverence, quite in keeping with the spirit of the celebration.

A picture was taken of the huge gathering, and the liveried waiters started to serve the food. The five Swamis rose to chant a Sanskrit grace, the English translation of which was given by Swami Paramananda. The guests enjoyed the delicious food and the courteous service.

After dinner Swami Gnaneshwarananda, the leader of the local centre, introduced Dr. Lake the toastmaster and turned over the meeting to him. Madame Joan Young, celebrated singer, sang two songs, after which Swami Gnaneshwarananda was called upon to read the inspiring messages from Swami Akhandananda, the President of the Ramakrishna Order, Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi and Romain Rolland, which were received with great enthusiasm.

Introduced eloquently by the toastmaster the speakers rose and were jubilantly

applauded. Swami Paramananda in his calm and dignified manner spoke of the meaning of the advent of Sri Ramakrishna. Dr. Scherger spoke feelingly on the depth of the culture of India. Swami Akhilananda expounded the scientific value of the spiritual experiences of Sri Ramakrishna. Swami Vividishananda presented with dignity and composure the universality of the message of the Master. Dr. Preston Bradley arose in the midst of deafening cheers and spoke eloquently about the need of spiritualizing modern culture and conveniences. It was nearly midnight when Swami Nikhilananda arose yet he was heard with great eagerness when he pointed out the fact that the message of Sri Ramakrishna was potent enough to save the world from war and destruction. The function terminated after midnight with a vote of thanks to the honored guests, proposed by Swami Gnaneshwarananda. The guests returned home with an impression to be cherished long in their hearts.

The celebration ended with a symposium of four lectures delivered by the four visiting Swamis on Sunday, March 22, at the spacious auditorium of the Society. Before two o'clock when the meeting opened the hall was packed to capacity, every inch of room being filled up, many standing, so that quite a large number had to be turned away for want of even peeping room. Each Swami spoke on a particular aspect of the life of Sri Ramakrishna keeping the huge crowd spellbound. Swami Vividishananda gave an illustrated talk on the Mission of Sri Ramakrishna showing delightful lantern pictures which created a lastingly vivid impression on the minds of the audience about the life of the Master and the work which has hitherto been done by his followers. The meeting closed at 5 P.M. with a prayer of peace.

### NEW YORK

The Sri Ramakrishna Centenary by the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center of New York was celebrated during a period of nearly three weeks. The Center began its celebration in the Chapel, on the 21st of February last, with a lecture by Swami Vividishananda of Washington, D.C., on Sri Ramakrishna, illustrated by beautiful lantern slides. A hundred and fifty people attended the lecture and felt themselves transported to the scenes of the holy life which has come to mean so much to them.

On February 22nd, two hundred friends and members of the Center participated in the Centenary dinner given in the large private dining room of a well-known restaurant near the Chapel. For the first time five Swamis of the Eastern Coast joined in one great function, to speak on the message of Sri Ramakrishna. It was most inspiring for the many guests to hear the Swamis Paramananda of Boston, Gnaneshwarananda of Chicago, Akhilananda of Providence, Vividishananda of Washington, and Swami Nikhilananda, each in his characteristic way told of the Master in whose service they had come far from their Mother-country to bestow His blessings far and wide. Mr. Salvatore de Madariaga, former ambassador of Spain to France and the U. S. A., and former chairman of the Disarmament Committee of the League of Nations, paid a beautiful tribute to the spiritual flowering of India, saying that he hoped it would soon be grafted on the tree of Western material progress. Many prominent New Yorkers attended the dinner, which received cordial notice from the press.

A week later, on Sunday, March 1st, the special Sri Ramakrishna Birthday Celebration was held at the Chapel, an unforgettable event for the crowds that attended it. Many eager souls stood out in the hallway to hear the service by Swami Nikhilananda, who spoke on the "Religious Experiences of a Great Master."

As the culmination of the Sri Ramakrishna Centennial, through the unstinted efforts of Swami Nikhilananda, a public meeting attended by twelve hundred people was held at the Town Hall of New York, on the evening of March 8 which was reported in our last May issue.

### BURMA

The Sri Ramakrishna Birthday Centenary Celebrations in Burma which came to an end on the 20th April last with a public meeting at which Swami Sharvananda, President, Ramakrishna Mission, Delhi, spoke on "The significance of the spiritual experiences of Sri Ramakrishna," were a great success.

The celebrations in Burma commenced on Friday, the 27th March last, with the opening of the Ramakrishna Centenary Exhibition of Arts and Crafts by Mr. M. M. Rafi, Mayor of Rangoon, at the Ladies' Park, East Rangoon. There was a very large gathering

present at the opening function. The Mayor in a simple speech paid a glowing tribute to the Saint of Dakshineswar, and exhorted the citizens of Rangoon to support the Exhibition by patronizing it in a large number. The support of the public was uniformly encouraging and about a lakh of people visited the Exhibition. Therefore the Exhibition was extended for a couple of days. On the 7th April, the Exhibition was closed. The stall-holders were granted certificates and medals, which were appreciated.

On the 5th April a mass procession was organized as part of the celebrations and the procession with a section devoted to various faiths and including Burmans, Indians, Chinese, and others went round the town through the principal thoroughfares. Symbols and placards, images and photos, of religious teachers and faiths were prominently displayed. More than 10,000 persons joined the procession, which proved to be most successful and the most effective means of bringing the message of the unity of the religions to the door of the man in the street.

The Religious Convention, which was the central feature of the celebrations, started on 8th April and lasted for three days. It was presided over by Prof. B. K. Sarkar of Calcutta University. Lectures were delivered by prominent and well-known local authorities on Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Zoroastrianism. On the 10th April, Prof. Sarkar delivered his presidential address.

On the following three days speeches were made on religious movements by prominent citizens. The subjects included Brahmoism, Arya Samaj, Sikhism, Taoism, Sufism, and Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement. Swami Sharvananda presided over the meetings on the 11th, 12th and 13th April, and spoke on Hinduism and Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement. Swami Sharvananda also delivered other public lectures on subjects connected with the Ramakrishna Centenary.

The celebrations of Sri Ramakrishna Centenary in districts were attended by Swami Sharvananda, who visited Pegu, Toungoo, Mandalay, and Maymyo, accompanied by Swami Punyananda, monk-in-charge of the Ramakrishna Hospital in Rangoon. They started from Rangoon on the 14th and returned on the 19th April. The celebrations in districts were enthusiastic and satisfactory.

### RAMKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, SARGACHHI

The celebration of the eighth anniversary of the consecration of the Temple of Sri Ramakrishna at the Sargachhi Asrama came off successfully on the 24th May. The function began with Mangal Aratrik and Puja in the morning. During the noon thousands of devotees and admirers coming from Calcutta, Murshidabad, Berhampore, and other places of the locality were entertained with beautiful Bhajan and other songs.

The music being over, a meeting was held at 1-30 P.M. under the presidency of Sreemat Swami Akhandanandaji Maharaj, the President of the Ramkrishna Math and Mission, and a Bengali speech, regarding the lives and ideals of Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, was delivered by Brahmachari Amulyakumar of Belur Math. The meeting came to a close with the concluding remarks of the president.

Then a Sankirtan party sang the holy name of Sri Krishna in chorus. As soon as the Sankirtan was over, hundreds of Daridra-Narayanans and Bhaktas began to rush to take the sacred Prasad. This began at 3-30 P.M. and was closed at 9 P.M. About 2,500 persons took Prasad this year. Perhaps, several hundreds more would have attended the ceremony, if there was no epidemic of small-pox. In one word, this year's celebration was a grand success.

### NATIONAL INSURANCE CO., LD.

Whatever conduces to the well-being and prosperity of the country should be welcome. The usefulness of Insurance Companies, if reliable, is great. The Report for the year 1935 shows that the above Company has, through years of hard work and sound policy, built up a position which in its strength and solidarity places it among the first few of the Indian Life Offices. During the year under review the Company has written new business (gross) amounting to Rs. 1,73,06,138 as against Rs. 1,69,58,280 in 1934, notwithstanding the fact that the Company has increased its rates of premium in 1935. The Life Fund of the Company has increased by Rs. 28,00,000 to Rs. 2,52,84,293. Both the Premium and Interest incomes have recorded a substantial increase. The most notable achievement of the Company is the decrease of its Expense Ratio which stands at 25.8% as compared with 26.4% last year. The



investment position of the Company as revealed in the Balance-Sheet is quite safe and sound. In distributing the Company's assets it appears to be the constant endeavour of the Management to preserve a judicious balance between various classes of investments ensuring thereby the greatest degree of stability, and that must be called as one of the most healthy signs for a Life Office.

The New Building of the Madras Branch of the Company was opened in China Bazar Road, Madras, by Sir P. S. Sivaswami Iyer, on the 1st May last, in the presence of a large and distinguished gathering. Sir Sivaswami in his presidential speech said that the Company was one of the oldest and most successful of Life Assurance Companies managed by Indians.

### RAMKRISHNA MISSION'S WORK AND APPEAL

#### KHULNA FAMINE

In our last report we have acquainted the public with the gravity of the situation due to famine in the Satkhira sub-division of the Khulna district. Men, women and children are starving by thousands. Over two-thirds of the population can barely manage to get a meal every other day. A small percentage is fortunate enough to have one meal a day. The rest have nothing to eat and have to fill their stomach with anything they can get. Naturally, cholera and other epidemics have broken out, with none to attend upon the sick. The earning members of most families have deserted their dependants, being unable to stand the sight of misery that knows no redress. Women are in rags, which forces them to keep indoors, although they are starving. There is not an iota of exaggeration in this picture. Rather many ugly features have been omitted.

From our Gabura centre in Thana Shyamnagar we distributed on the 1st June 27 mds. 24 srs. of rice to 552 recipients

belonging to 14 villages, and on the 9th June 48 mds. 26 srs. of rice to 873 recipients belonging to 16 villages. In addition to this, 9 mds. 38 srs. of rice was distributed as temporary aid.

#### BANKURA FAMINE

Bankura district is also badly affected by famine. Reports of the piteous condition of its inhabitants have been frequently reaching us. We have therefore decided to start relief work in the Kotalpur Thana of that district with the small amount of money at our disposal, relying on the sympathy of the public. Details of the work will be published in due course.

#### ARAKAN FLOOD

At Cheduba, a small island on the Arakan Coast of Burma, a centre has been started under the auspices of our Rangoon branch for the relief of the flood-stricken people of the Kyaukpadaung district. The first distribution of foodstuffs have already been made. Extreme difficulty of communication in this monsoon season has delayed our receiving the report in time.

Considering the appalling extensivity of the distress, we have been able to touch only a fringe of it. The relief must be continued, and for this we need the hearty co-operation of the large-hearted public. We earnestly hope that in the coming month the response to our appeal will be more encouraging, so that we may serve these thousands of hungry Narayanas with at least a few mouthfuls of food, and remove their nakedness in howsoever imperfect a way. All contributions will be gratefully accepted and acknowledged at the following addresses:—

- (1) The President, Ramkrishna Mission,  
Belur Math, District Howrah.
- (2) The Manager, Advaita Ashrama,  
4, Wellington Lane, Calcutta.  
(SD.) SWAMI MADHAYANANDA,  
Acting Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission.

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No. 8



“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

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## GOD, PERSONAL AND IMPERSONAL

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

My idea is that what you call a Personal God is the same as the impersonal Being, a personal and impersonal God at the same time. We are personalized impersonal beings. If you use the word in the absolute sense we are impersonal, but if you use it in a relative meaning, we are personal. Each one of you is a universal being, each one is omnipresent. It may seem staggering at first, but I am as sure of this as that I stand before you. How can the spirit help being omnipresent? It has neither length nor breadth, nor thickness, nor any material attribute whatsoever; and if we are all spirits we cannot be limited by space. Space only limits matter matter. If we were limited to this body we would be a material something. Body and soul and everything would be material, and such words as “living in the body”, “embodying the

soul” would be only words used for convenience; beyond that they would have no meaning. Many of you remember the definition I gave of the soul; that each soul is a circle whose centre is in one point and circumference nowhere. The centre is where the body is, and the activity is manifested there. You are omnipresent; only you have the consciousness of being concentrated in one point. That point has taken up particles of matter, and formed them into a machine to express itself. That through which it expresses itself is called the body. So you are everywhere; when one body or machine fails, you, the centre, move on and take up other particles of matter, finer or grosser and work through that. This is man, and what is God? God is a circle with circumference nowhere and centre everywhere. Every point in that circle is

living, conscious, active, and equally working with us limited souls, only one point is conscious, and that point moves forward and backward. As the body has a very infinitesimal existence in comparison with that of the universe, so the whole universe, in comparison with God, is nothing. When we talk of God speaking, we say He speaks through His universe; and when we speak of Him beyond all limitations of time and space, we say He is an Impersonal Being. Yet He is the same Being.

To give an illustration: We stand here and see the sun. Suppose one of you want to go towards the sun. After you get a few thousand miles nearer, you will see another sun, much bigger. Supposing you proceed much closer, you will see a much bigger sun. At last you

will see the real sun, millions and millions of miles big. Suppose you divide this journey into so many stages, and take photographs from each stage, and after you have taken the real sun, come back and compare them; they will all appear to be different, because the first view was a little red ball, and the real sun was millions of miles bigger; yet it was the same sun. It is the same with God: the Infinite Being we see from different standpoints, from different planes of mind. The lowest man sees Him as an ancestor; as his vision gets higher, as the Governor of a planet; still higher as the Governor of the universe, and the highest man sees Him as Himself. It was the same God and the different realizations were only degrees and difference of vision.

## THE PROBLEM OF AN INDIAN LINGUA FRANCA

BY THE EDITOR

### I

The demand for an Indian lingua franca is steadily increasing in various parts of India. The problem has already given rise to some linguistic developments in the country. One can hardly remain silent, while looking to the interests of such a nation-wide consciousness. People are found to discuss the problem more seriously nowadays than before. There are some who hold that it has been premature to make the problem a public one and that it has been wrong on the part of some of our public men to try to solve the problem in a hurry, especially at the present time when India is passing through various national turmoils. They apprehend that the movement may bring about fresh complications and difficulties

in the already troubled waters of India's communal and provincial moorings. A thoughtful article on the subject, written by Mr. M. Hamidullah and published in the last April issue of *The Calcutta Review*, drew our attention to some problems relating to the possibility of an Indian lingua franca. Before dwelling at length upon the points in favour of and against having an Indian lingua franca the writer observes at the very outset: "I think, it would have been far better in the long run if the problem of India's lingua franca had not been made a public one at this critical juncture of India's history. But in that haste, so characteristic of a rising nationalism some of our public men in their enthusiasm prematurely delivered it to the general public, who, not quite capable of realizing its

manifold difficulties and vast complications, at once brought it down to their own, comparatively low level of understanding. Very soon, the linguistic problem was given religious colouring (as, unfortunately, every important issue gets in this country). Camps were pitched, labelled, and one who ran could read communalism writ large on the newly woven linguistic canvas too. Nothing to say of canvassing that went on between camp and camp. Yet, in spite of much that is shoddy, unintelligent and unsatisfying there seems to have been born, of late, a genuine feeling among some Indian intellectuals and public men, who, while reading the present situation strongly desire that a way should be found out, the best and the least imperfect way, it being idle to expect anything like perfection, as long as imperfection continues to be an essential attribute of things."

The lingua franca movement has advanced in recent years not without a certain amount of success. The need of a lingua franca can hardly be overestimated, when the people of different provinces and communities keenly feel for a better understanding of their national and cultural relations. It is, therefore, needless to dilate on the point of the dangers and difficulties that the movement may encounter in the future. The thing that is to be carefully noticed is whether the movement was originally started by the people who were free from communal interests and were inspired by a lofty idea of bringing together the people of India in a common linguistic bond. It is unfortunate that in this country whenever any good movement is launched upon, the unthinking people who are already obsessed with communal interests begin to unfurl the banners of their own flags and thereby jeopardize the interests of the Indian nation as a whole.

It has become a habit with such people to suspect the things which cannot breed any cause of suspicion. The country is in such a peculiar set of circumstances that things often occur as aforesaid to the great disappointment of the well-wishers at home and abroad.

## II

The Hindu-Urdu controversy has for long been one of the principal discussions in relation to the question of an Indian lingua franca. The controversy has already brought forth an undesirable spirit among the modern writers of both Hindi and Urdu. In modern Urdu periodicals as it has been remarked by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, some Urdu writers have imported of late absolutely unfamiliar and uncouth terms borrowed from Arabic and Persian in the place of many of the commonest Indian words. On the other hand, some Hindi writers have already strained themselves to load their vocabulary with too many Sanskritic words. In the presidential address delivered last January at the third session of the Hindustani Academy of Allahabad, Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha observed: "So far as modern Hindi writing is concerned (in newspapers, periodicals, and books) I may frankly state that I have experienced very great difficulty in understanding it, though I can appreciate the beauties of the greatest classical poets in Hindi—like Kabir, Malik Muhammad Jayasi, Abdur Rahim Khan-e-Khana, Tulsi Das, Surdas, and Behari Lal—without referring to a dictionary such as I feel constantly compelled to do when reading modern Hindi prose and poetry. I do not know if the present style of writing in Hindi has evoked any protest, either in the press or on the platform, from amongst Hindi writers or readers. But it is gratifying to note that it has already

produced some healthy reaction." Mr. Sinha quotes in course of his speech the views of two eminent modern writers, one under the well-known pen-name of "Prem Chand" and the other, a famous Muslim writer named Azim Beg Chagtai. Their remarks are valuable in this connection, so we quote them for more light on the subject. Prem Chand observes : "Neither that Urdu which is full of strange Persian and Arabic words, nor that Hindi which is laden with cumbrous Sanskrit words can ever become the national language of India. Our national language can be only that which is the common language of the people. I will not agree to discard any word because it is Persian or Arabic or Sanskrit; my only test is whether or not the word is understandable by the common people." Azim Beg Chagtai observes with special reference to writing in Urdu and his remarks are no less applicable to writing in Hindi. He writes : "The supporters of both Urdu and Hindi are full of *zid* and prejudice, and are injuring both these languages. During the last twenty years the supporters of Urdu, particularly the Mussalmans, have forced so many Arabic words into it that it has become difficult for the average Hindu to read and understand Urdu. While, on the one hand, Hindus are giving up the study of Arabic and Persian, on the other hand, the Mussalmans have not only thrust into Urdu a large number of new and unfamiliar Arabic words, but have also ejected those Indian words which had long formed part of the Urdu language, and have substituted new Arabic words for them. This has resulted in making present-day Urdu unintelligible to the vast bulk of the Hindus, since it has become a necessary condition for understanding the new Urdu that a considerable portion of one's life should

have been spent in learning Arabic and Persian. Yet, in spite of it all, the supporters of the present-day Urdu have persuaded themselves that it is the national duty of every Hindu to study and propagate this new and terrible form of Urdu. It is thus absolutely essential if Urdu is to survive that its supporters should exercise very great moderation in the use of Arabic and Persian terms, and should be vigilant and alert in tapping the indigenous Indian sources, and utilising them for making Urdu the national language of India." It is thus obvious that the problem of an Indian lingua franca has already been faced with the Hindu-Urdu controversy and it is the duty of every right-thinking Indian not to encourage the people who try to bring forth communal strifes even in the linguistic field. In order to avoid such a lamentable state of affairs some people suggest that a serious effort should be made to do away with the two different names for the two forms of speech, which have become mixed up in the controversy. Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha strongly holds this view and prefers to use the word Hindustani so that the claim for either of the words Hindi and Urdu may be stopped for ever. If both the Hindus and the Mussalmans take the word on the principle of nationality as the language of England is called English, that of France, French, and so on and so forth, then the quarrel over a particular name may cease and "Hindustani" may be the name of the Indian lingua franca. Then again, people should devise ways and means to popularize the commonest words in daily talks, periodicals, newspapers, and recent books. In this way, we may expect to have a national language for all practical and national purposes. Mr. Sinha suggests that people may inaugurate a "Hindustani Literature" series

comprising (in whole or in part) such books, classical and modern, as are neither in inflated Urdu nor in bombastic Hindi, but which being in plain and simple Hindustani, can be printed in both the Nagari and the Arabic scripts.

### III

Now, what about the people whose vernaculars are neither Urdu nor Hindi? In this connection it is well to consider the linguistic position of the whole of India. Firstly, we find that there are as many as 723 languages and dialects spoken all over India and of them, over a dozen languages possess their own scripts. There is the Bengali script in Bengal, the Gurumukhi in the Punjab, the Sindhi in Sind, the Oriya in Utkal, the Gujrati in Gujarat, the Telegu in Andhradesha, the Tamil in Tamilnad, the Malayali in Kerala, the Kanarese in Karnatak, the Kaithi in Behar, and the Modi in the Deccan. Then again, if we take the figures of the numerical strength of the principal languages we find that Bengali is spoken by 53,468,469 persons; Assamese, by 1,999,057 persons; Marhati, by 20,890,658 persons; Tamil, by 20,412,652 persons; Telegu, by 26,373,727 persons; Malayalam, by 9,137,615 persons; Western Punjabi, by 8,566,051 persons; Pashtu, by 1,631,490 persons; Gujrati, by 10,849,934 persons; Punjabi, by 15,838,254 persons; Kanarese, by 11,206,380 persons; Oriya, by 11,194,265 persons; Rajasthani, by 13,897,896 persons; Hindustani (under which term the returns of both Urdu and Hindi as spoken languages have been amalgamated for census purposes), by 71,547,071 (*Western Hindi*) plus 7,867,103 (*Eastern Hindi*) plus 27,929,559 (*Behari*) persons. In this connection, it is to be noted by those

who think that English may serve the purpose of a lingua franca that only a very small educated minority of the vast Indian population speak and use the language in writing. Besides, since English is not an indigenous language of the Indian soil, it can hardly be the national language for the masses and the children of India. Mahatma Gandhi says: "As against hardly one per cent of the total population knowing English, over 60 per cent of the total population of India at the present moment understand the ordinary rustic Hindustani. For an Indian it is any day infinitely wiser to learn Hindustani than English."

The figures given above are sufficient to prove that Hindustani has the greatest advantage over the other languages in India for being the national language of the country. The other existing vernaculars will remain as they are and Hindustani is not designed to replace any of them but should be used only for inter-provincial contact and inter-communal harmony. So that the people of India may have an All-India vision, the language should be learnt by all means.

The parochial pride of the literary men belonging to the different Indian vernaculars should not prove a bar to the progress of Hindustani being adopted as the national language for India. One script will undoubtedly be a great advance forward to spread the language as lingua franca of India, but so long as the Hindu-Moslem consciousness pervades the national life of India, neither the Devanagari script nor the Arabic script will get the upper hand all over the country. Of course, there is a very strong argument for a modified Roman script to be adopted in the Indian lingua franca. The matter requires careful consideration by experts who should have an absorbing interest

in the national cause of India, the Hindu-Moslem unity, and a synthetic culture for the welfare of the different people of India.

#### IV

Sooner or later India will have to evolve a common language which should adopt the most familiar words and give up the obsolete and difficult terms, whether they be Sanskrit, Arabic, or Persian in their origin. The remarks of Sir William Marris while inaugurating the Hindustani Academy at Allahabad are noteworthy in this connection: "The ideal would be for every writer in Hindi to write as if he wished to find Muslim readers and *vice versa*." If this principle be followed, a steady progress may be expected in the process of evolving a common language, though for a long time the two different scripts of Devanagari and Urdu shall have to be continued. This step would again serve as a great weapon to combat the evils that rage round the Hindu-Muslim tension.

The 'Hans' movement is a step forward towards the commonwealth of literature in India. As a result of the movement, the Bhāratiya Sāhitya Parishad has been ushered into existence. It is said that a number of

Provincial Parishads which so far ran in separate grooves has given birth to this institution. Mr. K. M. Munshi observes that the 'Hans' movement is based on the one fact that in spite of provincial characteristics, the literature of every Indian language has a fundamental unity of tradition, outlook, and growth; what is now wanted is the growth of solidarity by a conscious exchange of literary forms, comments, and techniques. We are happy to learn that the movement is directed towards co-ordinating purposive efforts at enriching every provincial literature. It is hoped that all Provincial Sāhitya Parishads would leave no stone unturned in making the movement a success. The organizers of the 'Hans' movement stress the point that it would not tend to eliminate provincial languages and literatures, but would serve as an instrument for a complete exchange of the literatures and thus give birth to a common literary heritage.

If the spirit of provincialism be sacrificed for the sake of evolving an Indian lingua franca, not only the provincial languages will have a wider field to move in, and an All-India vision growing with it side by side, but a sympathetic understanding among the people of all provinces will steadily increase.

## RELATION OF SELF TO KNOWLEDGE

BY PROF. G. R. MALKANI, M.A. (Bombay), M.Litt. (Cantab)

It will be generally admitted that there is something which we call our self and that this self knows. It has indeed been questioned whether there is any entity which deserves to be called the self. That we use this term significantly is not denied. But, it is argued, we do not know the self as we

should, and we cannot say definitely whether it stands for a single entity running through our mental life, or a succession of entities related in a certain way.

It is true that we do not know the self as we may be said to know other entities. Other entities are presentable.

They represent more or less definite content. The self is not presentable. It cannot be contemplated in itself. It represents no particular content. The only way to know the self is to represent it as the knower or as the subject of some mental act. It is what knows, wills etc. But although we cannot contemplate the self in itself, we cannot be said to lack knowledge of it. It is at least as evident as any particular piece of knowledge. For knowledge is not what may be called a neutral fact. It is necessarily claimed. It is knowledge on the part of a self. If then knowledge is a fact which we do not doubt, the self is doubly so.

The self may not be wholly unknown. But is our knowledge of it adequate? Can we say whether it is a single entity or a succession of entities which we somehow identify? Now we have in this connection the intuition on the part of the self of its identity in different mental acts; I who was *then* am *now*, I who was ignorant am the person knowing now, etc. This intuition however may be otherwise explained. It may be argued that there is no single entity but a succession of entities, neither of which deserves to be called a self, for neither of them persists. The question will naturally arise, how can we speak of a series of successive terms without a principle of unity that so arranges the terms and apprehends them in that relation? This question may no doubt be met by saying that that is a subjective demand only, and that terms can be in fact successive although no unity underlies them. But the terms are not only successive. One member, namely, the present self, knows its identity with some other members of the series. This apprehension of identity may indeed be taken to be false since we have postulated that the entities are really different. But how is even this false

apprehension possible? One condition is that the member that knows its identity with other members must at least know the latter. How can it know what has preceded it? Let us suppose that each preceding member communicates this knowledge to the succeeding. This form of communication is indeed not intelligible; for the two members in question are not co-present. But let us suppose that it is somehow possible.

The second condition is that the entity that apprehends the identity of two terms must be distinct from those terms. It must hold the two apart and bring them together in the required relation. To know the identity of A and B, there must be an "I" which knows A and which knows B and which brings the two together in that relation which constitutes its apprehension of their identity. This "I" is the common ground. It is the real unity. If we question this, the two terms will not be available, and there will be no consciousness of identity, true or false. We contend that the proof of the identity of the self lies not in the fact that the present self is known to be identical with the self in the past; such knowledge of identity may be false, and is in any case questionable. But we can never doubt the unchanging and self-identical character of the entity that has the apprehension of identity in question. That identity alone, the presupposition of the conscious apprehension of all identity, is unquestioned and absolute. It is the identity that properly belongs to our self.

There is one self-identical self that knows in different acts of knowledge. But, it will be argued, there is no piece of knowledge which is always there. Every piece of knowledge arises and then ceases. It may be followed by another piece of knowledge. But these pieces are quite distinct one from



another. The self cannot therefore be *always* knowing. This is also proved by the fact that there are certain lapses of consciousness when the self cannot be supposed to know anything. The self then knows, but also at times does not know.

This however is not wholly true. The knowledge of a particular object may be said to arise. But the awareness of the self cannot be said to be limited to such knowledge. It extends beyond it, inasmuch as the self is aware of the interval between one piece of knowledge and another. The self is aware that before it knew a particular thing, it did not know it. Indeed, before it knows A, it is not conscious of being ignorant of A. But the very fact that this consciousness can be elicited later on proves that the awareness of the self cannot be limited to the actual knowledge of A, but remains unimpaired even in the absence of such knowledge. The awareness of the self cannot be said to arise or to disappear. It is the presupposition of knowledge arising and disappearing.

The self may be always aware. But it appears that we must distinguish the self and its awareness. The self is aware, but it is not the same thing as its awareness. Let us suppose that this is so. But then how are the two related? Can awareness be regarded as a quality of the self? We contend that the self can have no quality.

A quality is what distinguishes a thing from other things. A quality that does not distinguish is no quality. The self however is no kind of object. All objects are objects in distinction from it. Indeed this seems to imply that the self too is distinct from objects. But that does not follow, and is not possible. If the self were distinct from objects, it would be another object, and the very objectivity of objects would be rendered

meaningless. When therefore we make the distinction of the self and the not-self, this distinction cannot be treated like any distinction between one object and another. It is not an ordinary distinction. It is really no distinction at all. For the self is no kind of object. How can it then be distinguished from anything? How can it possess a quality which distinguishes only one object from another object?

The self may have a quality. But can awareness be such a quality? Can it distinguish the self from the not-self? A distinguishing mark or quality should belong to the thing it distinguishes and should not belong to what the thing is distinguished from. If now awareness belong to the self and non-awareness to the not-self, there can be no awareness of the distinction. Awareness as the quality of one of the terms will be wholly exclusive of the other term. It cannot be the common ground. It cannot comprehend both the terms. The not-self will not at all be known; and the very distinction of the self and the not-self will be impossible of realization.

Awareness may not be a quality of the self. Let it be anything. But is there no distinction between the self and awareness? We contend that any distinction between the two is impossible. The same old objection would recur. The distinction must be capable of being known. The self must know itself to be distinct from its awareness. But how can it know this when awareness itself is the other term?

It might be said, "The self may not be able formally to present the distinction to itself. But the two are nevertheless distinct. Awareness is relative, the being of the self is not". Thus it will be said that awareness belongs to the self only in relation to something or other of which the self can be said to be

aware. If we conceive every element of the not-self to be absent, the self would not be aware, and its awareness would have ceased. The self would not have ceased on that account. It would continue to have being. But is this intelligible? Can existence of the self transcend awareness on its part? There is indeed no awareness of the self. But its existence is only assertible in so far as the self is aware. The self is self-revealed; and it is self-revealed only as it reveals other things. There is simply no question of an assertion of any existence unrelated to knowledge or awareness.

It may be said,—What if there is no object? Will the self be aware? And if it is not, will the self cease to be? But firstly, we can never point to a situation within our experience in which there is no object whatsoever of awareness. Secondly, granting that that is possible, can we deny all awareness in the self? We can only deny it on the ground that there is something which is not revealed by it. We can only think of the absence of knowledge when we think of something which exists but is not revealed by knowledge. If we really suppose that there is *nothing* to be revealed, how can we conceive the very absence of revelation? It is just like light. It lights up things. If there is nothing to be lighted up, there is nothing to show it up. That is all. If then we postulate anything, it is certainly known. But if we do not postulate, we cannot conclude from this the absence of knowledge. Thirdly, we do not deny the existence of the self when there is no object. But what are our grounds for this existence of the self? Can they exclude all awareness? We cannot escape the conclusion that when there is nothing to be known or revealed the self does not lose its aware-

ness. It remains one with awareness or as pure awareness.

It might now be argued that there is no question of the self being merely itself or being one with awareness. The self is always aware of something or other, and its existence is only to be conceived in relation to its awareness; it is what is aware. In waking life it is certainly aware of things. So also it is in dreams. It is only in deep sleep and states of unconsciousness that we might say with some plausibility that it is not aware. But even here it can be proved that it is aware. It is aware of what we might call a state of ignorance. If it were not aware, we could not possibly know on waking up that we slept or that we lost consciousness. Thus, as far as our experience goes, the self is always aware; and it is, only as it is aware.

This argument can easily be extended to include all possible conditions of being. Death itself can only be thought of on the analogy of sleep. It is generally conceived as an endless state of slumber. But to call something a *state* of being and to call it *endless* is a contradiction. If a condition of being is not conceived as ended and as alternating with other known conditions, it would not be apprehensible as a condition or a state at all. Death is significant as a possible condition of being only as it leads to life again. Without such implication it is not a possible object of our thought. The conclusion thus becomes inevitable that the self is immortal and awareness forms part of it.

This argument would appear to be quite plausible. But evidently, if it were altogether sound, it would condemn the self to an unremitting intercourse with the not-self or the world and to alternating states of knowledge and ignorance. Is it not possible to escape such a conclusion? We do not

know how it can be escaped except on one condition. That condition is that the self is never aware of anything beside itself. It never knows. It is always pure awareness. It is not that there is a time in which it will not be aware of any object, or that we can attain to a state of being in which it will not be so aware, but that it is ever so. When we say that the self is aware, we mean that it is pure awareness. Pure awareness is the only awareness there is. The other variety which we recognize as awareness is only so spoken of. Or in other words, what we call awareness of . . . , is really no case of awareness. Instead therefore of saying that awareness must be *of* something, we should more properly say that awareness can never be *of* a thing. Real awareness is pure awareness.

We know objects. There are different kinds of objects,—sights, sounds, smells etc. We are also said to know the different forms of knowing these objects; we distinguish them as seeing, hearing, etc. We go beyond this. Seeing, hearing etc. are all *knowing*. We cannot indeed disengage this *knowing* from its forms. But we conceive it as what is common to them. It is also what we may be said to know. It is relative to the object *in general*. But is there any real awareness in all this? The objects are mere objects. They are not awareness. Seeing, hearing etc. may be such. But take away their respective objects. What is left of seeing and hearing? Their differences are due to the differences in the object. Without the latter, the former would be abolished, and we can no longer significantly speak of seeing, hearing etc. These are only objects of another kind.

Shall we say that the awareness which is common to the different forms of knowing is real awareness? But once again take away the object as such, and

what is left of this awareness? Can we know it as awareness? Thus we find that what we are said to know as awareness is that awareness only in relation to the object. It cannot be thought of apart from the relation. It is only another kind of object. It is not the real awareness.

Real awareness can never be an *object* to us. It can never be reflected upon. What is reflected upon is some act of the mind, subjective in character, which is that act only with reference to some object. Real awareness is pure awareness. It is not the awareness *of* anything. We contend that the self has always such awareness and no other. There is no other variety of awareness. When we say that the self is aware, we should really mean that it is awareness. In any other sense, "being aware" becomes meaningless; awareness becomes only some kind of object.

This indicates a duality of points of view which is ultimate and determines our view of things. Looked at from the standpoint of objectivity, anything that is real must be objective. If awareness is real, it is only as it is the awareness of objects, and thus objective to another awareness. If the self is real, it is only as it is the knowing subject and so necessarily related to objects. Beyond this, nothing can be, and nothing is, real. Looked at from the point of view of real awareness or the self which is identical with it, there is no *other*. The moment an *other* is conceived, awareness is degraded (we can only speak of it as awareness *of* . . . ), the self is degraded (we can only speak of it as what knows . . . ); we have lost touch with reality. The real self does not know, because there can be nothing beside it which it may know. What knows is less than the self.

How do we reconcile these two points of view? We may indeed regard them

as two different standpoints equally valid and unrelated; looked at from one standpoint, reality is all of one sort; looked at from the other, it is all of the other sort. But it will be seen that we have really no such freedom in choice. The standpoint of the self is completely intelligible in itself; it has no implication. Even when the self is said to be aware, it is not aware,—it is awareness itself; there is no *other* to which its being is related; any kind of relation would contradict this being. But the other standpoint is not intelligible in itself. It has a necessary implication. The object can only be an object to a self which is no object. The reality of the former implies the reality of the latter. The objective standpoint is therefore necessarily self-contradictory. It denies the reality of that which is necessary to its own possibility. Indeed, restricting ourselves to this standpoint, we may try to prove its self-consistency. The object is to a subject. But what is this subject? Is it not related to the object? Is it not capable of being known? If it is, then it is useless to speak of a self which cannot be related. The argument can be carried a step further. The subject itself may be said to be known. It therefore implies another subject. Can this be the real self? But that would be equally fallacious. There is no implication of the so-called real self anywhere. What the object implies is a subject. This subject too may imply another subject. But there is no room in all this for an unrelated entity such as we understand the real self to be. We cannot get away from the related self and prove that the object implies any other self.

This argument and this justification of the objective standpoint involves, in our opinion, a confusion of thought. It is admitted that the object is known. But is it known by something which

is itself an object? Evidently, this is impossible. If every knower in turn could be treated as an object, it would imply some other knower, and so on *ad infinitum*. The real knower would not be available, and none of the series of objects would be those objects or would ever be known. The real knower must be object of no kind; it must not be relatable; it must be the real self in our sense of the term. *The unrelated self is the only true knower.* We cannot now turn round and say, what is this knower? Is it not related? Any such questions would be meaningless. There remains only one objection. Is it not a patent self-contradiction to say that the self does not know and in the same breath that it is the only true knower? This contradiction however would disappear when we realize that the object is never really known. We only so speak of it. Show us a case of real knowing, and we shall show you that what we speak of as object is not known in it. We can perhaps point to our actual seeing of a thing. But that seeing which we can reflect upon is not real seeing; and the thing which is said to be known in it is not the real thing. The object is object only in this reflective seeing; and seeing is seeing of an object only in it. In the real seeing, if we could get back to it, there is no object. That seeing is pure awareness. We thus come to the conclusion that not only the objective standpoint involves the other standpoint or the reality of the unrelated self, but that it is no standpoint at all; the object is never really known; and when we try to bring it to real knowledge, that knowledge cannot be spoken of as the knowledge of any object; it is seen to be nothing more or less than pure awareness. Our choice is thus eliminated and we are forced to conclude that the self is the only reality.

It is sometimes argued that if the self alone is real, what becomes of the world? We may say that it is illusory. We may also suppose that the illusory does not exist and is as a matter of fact nothing. But still when we look away from the world to the self, we seem to lose something of reality. We do not realize the world as nothing, and the problem does arise for us, does the self exclude the world and thereby lack something which is not merely nothing.

Now, on grounds of reason, there is no problem. The illusory is not. But if a problem does arise for us in spite of our better judgment, there must be a misapprehension somewhere which has not been corrected. It is the business of philosophical analysis to correct the misapprehension and free the mind from error and the consequent bondage.

The misapprehension in question is the belief that the self sees the world or that we see the world. This indeed gives us our most cogent reason for the illusoriness of the world,—a point which we cannot elaborate here. But it does not dissipate our seeing. We still seem to see the world; and because we see it, it is not nothing. There is something in it, which we shall lose if we lose our seeing or if we cease to see. It is not essential to this argument that we should regard the world as real. All that is necessary to it is the supposition that there is a seeing of a world which need not be anything apart from the seeing. Or what is the same thing, the illusory may be nothing; but the seeing of the illusory cannot be denied. As against the illusoriness of the world we have then the proposition,—the world is at least real as seen. From this, it is only a step further to suppose that the world is created.

A view is sometimes put forward that illusion is due to a confusion of subjective functions. The illusory is not

really seen but only willed or imagined. The illusion is due to taking the product of our will or imagination for a real matter of knowledge. When we disengage the subjective functions and dissipate the confusion, when we realize that the illusory is not seen at all but only willed or imagined, the illusion disappears. The illusory snake ceases to be a seen snake; it is realized as a willed snake or a snake of our creation. The world, in any sense that it is illusory, must similarly be a creation. But since no analysis of our experience exposes the illusion in our case and we do not see the world to be an illusion, we must suppose that it is not really created by us. So far as we are concerned, it is as good as really given; it is known. It is created by God who alone properly knows its non-existent and non-real character.

All theories of creation would look at the world in some such way. The world is not nothing. All that we can say is that it has no self-existence. It has the sort of reality which created things have. They have no being apart from the creative act. The act however is a real act. God has done something; and reality would be poorer without His doing.

The whole problem puts on a different complexion on our view of things. The world is not created by me. And we need not go to a distant God to create it for us. We can however see the world to be really *nothing*. And we can see this, if we ask ourselves the question,—is the world seen at all? Does the self see the world? Our answer is that real seeing is pure seeing,—it is not the seeing of anything. We can never know it or make it an object of reflection. What we reflect upon as seeing is not the real seeing. It is only an object of some kind which is spoken of as seeing. The self then does not see the

world. *The self only sees when it sees nothing beside itself.* "Seeing, it does not see. Hearing, it does not hear". What can this mean but that, if the self sees anything it sees itself, if it hears anything it hears itself, etc.? It cannot see or hear anything beside itself; for there is nothing beside itself to see or to hear. The self is pure intelligence without a second.

Does any problem about the world remain? If the self saw the world, we could also significantly speak of its not seeing the world. As it is, neither of these assertions has meaning. The self neither sees the world, nor does it not see it, nor is there any real problem about it. The problem arises as soon as we wrongly suppose that the world is actually and really known. This error leads to another. We believe that the world may not be known; and if it is not known, there is a loss of reality. In actual fact, the self is free from the limitations both of knowledge and of ignorance. These imply an *other*. The self has no *other*. It is omniscience itself in the only proper sense of that term.

We can have an idea of the freedom of the self by a reference to common experience. There we have the condition in which a particular piece of knowledge has not arisen. But so far, we

have consciousness neither of knowledge nor of non-knowledge. Indeed we suppose that there is non-knowledge or ignorance. But there is no awareness of this till knowledge has arisen. When we know, we also become aware that we were not knowing till then. This previous ignorance, this defect of knowledge on our part, this privation arises with knowledge. In real fact, self-awareness alone was there. We now think that the self was aware of ignorance (since the rise of knowledge has made past ignorance a fact of equal validity), while in fact the self itself had no such awareness and was really free. The self and its awareness cannot be denied; but any assertion of past ignorance would have to take into account factors which do not belong to the past.

We conclude that what we call knowledge is no case of real knowledge or real awareness. Real awareness is pure awareness. It has no reference to anything beyond itself or to an *other*. The self is this awareness. Any distinction of its being and its awareness would be untenable. Thus in the self alone is the true ideal of knowledge realized. If anything is known, the self alone is known. It is the beginning and the end of knowledge. There is no other knowledge.

## RAMAKRISHNA AND THE SPIRIT OF SERVICE

By MISS DOROTHY STEDE

To begin with, I am going back more than 2000 years, to the period of the *Upanishads*. Here we have the doctrine of the world-soul, which pervades the universe, and which, whether it be regarded as Brahman, the abstract cosmical principle, or as *Ātman*, the psychical principle or individual soul in man, is one and the same. Brahman,

the absolute, is manifest in all things,—plants, animals, and men; and the highest aim to be attained is the absorption of the individual soul in the world-soul, through correct knowledge.

This doctrine has vitally influenced all Indian religious and philosophical systems from that day to this, and we cannot hope to grasp the teachings of

any Indian saint, if we have no understanding of this "pantheism" (as we call it for lack of a better term), which we find to some extent in our own Western poets. Wordsworth, for example, says,

"And 'tis my faith that every flower  
Enjoys the air it breathes."

And George Herbert :

"Thou art in all things one, in each  
thing many ;

For Thou art infinite in one and all."

With these sentiments we may compare several passages of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, e.g. Krishna's

"Yo mām paçyati sarvatra sarvam ca  
mayi paçyati, tasyāham na prana-  
çyāmi sa ca me na pranaçyati."

("Whoso sees me everywhere, and sees everything in me,— for him I shall not be lost, nor will he be lost to me.")

Now let us turn to Ramakrishna. His comparatively short life of fifty years has been called an epitome of all the strivings of mankind; it was indeed, in the highest sense, a search after, and a grasping of, the Truth. During the first 17 years or so of his life, he grew up, so far as one could see, as an ordinary village boy, who was at home with Nature, and had little use for books and learning. But even as a child he sensed vague longings, undefined hankerings after something he did not understand.

At the age of 17, he was taken to Calcutta by his elder brother, and now the second stage of his life began. Soon afterwards, in 1855, he was appointed a priest in a newly-opened temple to Kālī, the Divine Mother. And now he knew what it was that he hankered after. It was God. And during the next years all the hidden psychic forces of his being were brought into play, in his passionate efforts to realize God. He became possessed by a kind of divine madness, and eventual-

ly worked himself up to such a pitch that he would remain in a trance, an ecstasy, for weeks and months at a time. The technical term for the supreme trance is Nirvikalpa Samādhi, or absorption in the Infinite. This stage is preceded by (1) devotion to one particular God; (2) realization of God in everything; (3) Savikalpa Samādhi, a trance in which the material world disappears, but the consciousness of bliss remains. Then comes the final stage, when there is no consciousness, only absorption. This is a state akin to death, and it is only a superhuman who can return from it to the world of form.

After years of these spiritual strivings, Ramakrishna entered upon the third period of his life. He had contacted God, or the Divine Spirit,—it does not matter what we call it—; he was now ready to diffuse his new-found knowledge among mankind. At this point we must discuss the Spirit of Service. It is interesting to note that the word *serve* comes from the same verbal root as the word *save*, and also as the Sanskrit *hr*, *harati*, which means to take or seize. We serve what we would save, or preserve; our aim should be to serve God by saving his creatures. But the idea of saving should not be a patronizing one,—he who saves, or who is the instrument of salvation, should have no sense of superiority to the saved person. Saving implies contact, whether physical (such as rescuing a man from drowning) or spiritual. So it may well have something to do with *harati*, to seize.

Ramakrishna had this power of spiritual contact. All who knew him admitted that this tact and power of understanding were marvellous; he never imposed his will on others, but always he seemed to communicate to them the ability to find their innate divinity in the inmost reaches of their soul. In the last stage of his life, when

he drew disciples to him, it is noteworthy that he never taught exactly the same process to any two of his devotees. He at least was no slave of the Western cult of standardization. His entire absence of ego-consciousness, even perhaps his lack of book-learning, made it supremely possible for the Divine to work through him. None of the stops of the flute of his psyche was clogged by self-absorption; so the Divine could work through him without obstruction. And it is surely no idle statement to say that it was this which gave him his tact and his power of adapting himself to the person with whom he was dealing. He had realized that opinions and creeds, when followed sincerely, are but different paths suited to each man's character and inclinations,—but one and all they lead to God. His extraordinary catholicity gave him sympathy, not only with the different Hindu creeds, but also with Mohammedanism and Christianity. He even went so far as to say that diversity of faiths was a good thing, for it ensured that, with a wide range to choose from, men were more likely to find a belief that suited them.

Ramakrishna's ability to adapt his methods and teaching to the individual cannot be over-emphasized. He never expected a man to attain perfection at once, and he was never dismayed at the sight of human frailty. Seeing the immanent divinity in all creatures, he was always willing to advise, and to give the necessary guidance in the successive stages of enlightenment. But he did not ask his pupils to play a sonata before they were familiar with all the scales. And, if I may use a simile from everyday life,—eliminating the idea of mental or moral progress,—I would compare Ramakrishna, in all reverence, to a 'bus conductor. If people asked him where to get off, he would tell

them; but he would not force them on their way, being willing to stop the 'bus every now and then for people to get off and on. But if they wished, and if they were willing to stand the fatigue, they were at liberty to travel the whole journey under his guidance. True service is not blind unreasoning devotion; it is necessarily tempered with discrimination. And it was from the word discrimination that Ramakrishna's foremost disciple, Vivekananda, took his name.

Let me give you one or two examples of his spirit of service. Once a young woman came to him in great distress, and confessed that when she prayed, she could not concentrate. Ramakrishna said, "What do you love best in the world?" She replied, her brother's child. He said, "Very well then, fix your thoughts upon him." She did so, and worshipped God through her love for the child. Another time, Ramakrishna was travelling with Mathur Babu, a rich patron. It happened that they passed through a country which had been ravaged by famine, and some poor stricken creatures were sitting hungry by the wayside. Ramakrishna said to Mathur Babu, "Do you feed them"; and when he protested that he could not support the whole world with his wealth, the saint sat down and wept, and vowed that he would stay with the poor creatures and share their fate. So Mathur Babu had to give in. It is said that this saint reached such heights of devotion to the divine in all things that he could not bear to trample upon the earth, for fear of hurting it.

It was not always possible for him to give material aid to the poor and the needy, but he gave richly of his store of spiritual wealth, and provided his disciples with an example of complete self-negation. Indeed, he voluntarily short-



ened his life, rather than deny anyone who came to him a jot of spiritual encouragement. For it is well known that he died of an affection of the throat which developed into cancer, but which might have been cured, had he been willing to give up speaking, and to refrain from exhausting his psychic energy. It was he who inspired his disciples, led by the great Vivekananda, to go forth into the world and serve mankind, in material as well as in spiritual ways. He set the example of what we in the West would call a two-fold service,—the service of God and the service of man. But the Vedântists teach that this two-fold service is in reality one,—the service of the Infinite which abides in all things.

Once again I should like to draw your attention to some words,—though I realize that words are but symbols, and must not obscure our vision of the Truth. Ramakrishna has often been

called the great Bhakta, or exponent of Bhakti, which is commonly translated by *devotion*. But Bhakti comes from the root *bhaj*, to partake, or share, and implies a sort of contract between God and man, whereby each associates with the other, for their mutual benefit. In this sense we can connect Bhakti, partaking, through *harati*, to take, with our word service. And since to serve is to save, and since spirit and inspiration both contain the same idea of breathing in and through, of permeation, we can say that in Ramakrishna's spirit of service we may find our inspiration for salvation.

It is not for all of us to be, like Ramakrishna, a beacon sending forth steady light to mighty ships. But we *can* develop within us a match which gives light in the darkness for an instant. And, as nothing is ever lost, that flickering match will glow into eternity.

## FOUR CURRENTS IN INDIAN SPIRITUAL HISTORY

BY PROF. ABINASH CHANDRA BOSE, M.A.

### 1. FOUR TYPES OF ETHOS

The fourfold division of society in India began as a mere classification of the four types of occupation found in a civilized society—the intellectual and spiritual, the military and political, the industrial and commercial, and the menial. In course of time—and it must be measured in centuries—the broad conception of occupational types came to be transformed into the institution of castes as we know them today.

The caste system as a social organization has been studied in detail. But it does not appear to have been sufficiently recognized that side by side with the

four economic divisions of society there developed four distinct types of spiritual and moral ideals; and what is even more interesting, that while the four socio-economical groups were always living in harmony, having really substituted co-operation for competition, the four spiritual and ethical ideals were perpetually at war with one another, each trying to supersede the others. It would appear that, in fact, every ideal had its day, during which it dominated over the rest.

In the following pages I propose to view the whole spiritual and moral history of India in the light of the above theory.

As we observe the castes crystallizing into rigid groups, we find Indian society developing on four distinct lines. The Brâhmana followed knowledge, both finite and absolute, with a growing indifference to politics and worldly affairs, which it became the business of the Kshatriya to control. The Kshatriya brought valour, leadership, and skill to the task of organizing and protecting society. He gave it justice and security. The Vaisya, being devoted to trade and industry which brought him increasing wealth, accepted the spiritual knowledge of the Brâhmana and the political protection of the Kshatriya, and interested himself little in metaphysics or politics. The Sudra took up a career of service as a camp-follower of the Kshatriya or a labourer under the Vaisya.

Thus while the Brâhmana was engaged in extending the boundaries of knowledge till he included ultimate knowledge within him and he could call himself a sage, the Kshatriya made it his ideal to extend the boundaries of his realm till he touched the sea on two sides and he could describe himself as "one seated in the centre of a circle" (*chakravartin*), and the Vaisya was engaged in extending his trade to the farthest corners of the earth to which his ocean-craft could convey him and in amassing wealth that made his land fabulously rich. The Sudra's ideal was to serve his master even at the cost of his life. The Brâhmana seeking spiritual liberty and power was particularly individualistic and transcendental, the Kshatriya seeking political liberty and power was particularly collectivistic and martial, the Vaisya seeking wealth was particularly pacifistic, and the Sudra engaged in service was particularly altruistic.

Thus we find that side by side with

the four caste groups there developed four types of ethics.

That the occupational division of caste was associated with spiritual and moral qualities also was recognized quite early. The *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, proposing to describe the duties of the four castes, really describes the intrinsic virtues, though only in the case of two of them. The following is the account of the Brâhmana and Kshatriya qualities :

"Serenity, self-restraint, austerity, purity, forgiveness and also uprightness, finite knowledge, absolute knowledge, realization of the existence of God—these are the inborn duties (really, virtues) of the Brâhmana."

"Valour, fire (*Tejas*), firmness, dexterity, and not flying from battle, liberality (*Dânam*), lordliness (or leadership, in modern parlance),—these are the inborn Kshatriya duties (really virtues)."

Unfortunately the *Gîtâ* does not follow up the method to describe the virtues of the Vaisya and the Sudra. (In their case it mentions the occupation.) One could perhaps describe their distinctive virtues as follows :

Pacifism, non-violence (*Ahimsâ*), amiability, (Vinaya), charity, faith,—these are the natural Vaisya virtues.

Service, self-surrender, self-sacrifice, devotion, belief in the word (*Nâma*), obedience to the master, secular and spiritual,—these are the natural Sudra virtues.

## 2. VEDIC PERIOD : KSHATRIYA ETHOS

If we divide the religious history of India into four great epochs—the Vedic, the Upanishadic, the Buddhistic and the Puranic then we can designate them as respectively the Kshatriya epoch, the Brâhmana epoch, the Vaisya epoch and the Sudra epoch.

The Kshatriya ideal dominated the Vedic period. It was a heroic age, active rather than meditative, as much material as spiritual, marked by an epic conception of life, an emphasis on will, and a determination to win victory over

every kind of opposition and to live a prosperous corporate life. "We will see for a hundred autumns," is the Vedic prayer or rather resolution.

"We will breathe for a hundred autumns, we will hear for a hundred autumns, we will speak for a hundred autumns, and we will hold our heads high (lit. be not lowly) for a hundred autumns."

"Having crossed the ways of evil," runs another prayer, "we will live for a hundred winters with all our sons."

It is significant that the Vedic Arya called his son a hero (Vira). The Vedic woman prayed to be a mother of heroes.

Having his mind fixed on the concrete rather than the abstract, the Vedic Indian felt the appeal of form, and his consciousness of the divine was coloured by a profound sense of the sublimity and beauty of the universe surrounding him. So he expressed himself in noble strains of poetry and music. With a profound joy in his soul he contemplated the Sun, the Sky, the Earth, the Fire, the loveliness of the Dawn, the vastness of the Sea, the fury of the Winds, and a Splendour beyond all description, "the wonder of all wonders" and through an easy symbolism realized the "One Existence which the sages call by many names" (*Rigveda*). He wished to live in unison with the universe.

"May that peace, which is in the sky and the firmament, on the earth and the water, in herbs and trees, in all gods and in everything, descend on my soul (lit. come to me)." (*Yajurveda*).

He wanted to be the master of the earth and prayed for power, which to him was an attribute of the Divine.

"Thou art fire (Tejas), give me fire ; Thou art prowess, give me prowess ; Thou art strength, give me strength ; Thou art vigour, give me vigour ; Thou art wrath, give me wrath ; Thou art forbearance, give me forbearance." (*Yajurveda*).

He wanted to be at home on the

earth,—to live in peace and amity with the universe, free from fear.

"Let me be fearless of the known, and fearless of the unknown ; fearless of the night and fearless of the day ; let all the quarters be my friends." (*Atharvaveda*).

"I shall look on all beings with the eye of a friend" (*Yajurveda*), is another prayer or resolution.

Not that the Vedic Aryan was indifferent to transcendentalism. In fact it is the very theme of the *Vedas*. "Of what use are the verses of the Veda to him," so runs a verse in the very first Mandala of the *Rigveda*, "who has not through the verses known the indestructible, ultimate Being. . . ?" "By knowing Him alone," it is said elsewhere, "one gets over death ; there is no other way to go." In the *Veda* transcendentalism does not supersede materialism ; it complements it.

### 3. UPANISHADIC PERIOD : BRAHMANA ETHOS

The *Upanishad* leaves the external universe for the abysmal depths of the soul of man, form for the formless, perception for a mystic intuition, poetry for metaphysics. As it leaves the world of phenomena for a noumenal world, it exchanges action for meditation, the Kshatriya outlook on life for a Brâhmana one. In the words of the modern psychologist, the introvert takes the place of the extrovert.

At the end of the Vedic period the homogeneous Indian society was getting split up into two rival sections. While the Kshatriya lived in the city engaged in administration and warfare, the Brâhmana made it his aim to migrate to the forest and live a secluded life devoted exclusively to the spiritual quest. He became indifferent to politics and economics and took metaphysics as his *metier*. Self-discipline (*Brahmacharya*) and self-realization (*Brahmajñāna*) became the twofold objects of

his pursuit. For the Kshatriya ideal of world-conquest he substituted the ideal of self-conquest; for the wealth that the Vaisya sought, he substituted spiritual knowledge, having voluntarily courted a life of poverty. He claimed to have developed a destructive power of the soul as a substitute for the physical force of the Kshatriya—the power of cursing, though ordinarily he expected the Kshatriya to protect him even in the forest.

The Upanishadic ideal was individualistic while the Vedic was collectivistic.

The *Upanishad*, claiming to be a personal realization of the truth revealed in the *Veda*, used, as a rule, a cryptic and gnomic language, that aimed at expressing the professedly inexpressible experiences of the spirit. There is little of the rich imagery or passionate eloquence of the *Veda*, in which the inspiration was derived from the perception of phenomena, and even in describing mystic experience the perceptual imagery was metaphorically or symbolically used (e.g. "The great Being, of the colour of the sun beyond darkness").

In the fourfold division of life that came to be made about this time, only one part was reserved for the pursuit of worldly affairs (*Grihastâsrama*), and three parts were given to self-discipline and self-realization. Towards the end of the Upanishadic period there developed the tendency among the extreme sections of the Brahmvâdins to proceed direct from the first to the last stage, altogether foregoing the worldly life.

By his intellectual and spiritual achievements the Brâhmana succeeded in building up a high prestige for him. In spite of his poverty he received great respect from king and people alike. The Brâhmana ideal was even weaning Kshatriyas from their military and political pursuits.

#### 4. EPIC PERIOD : BRAHMANA-KSHATRIYA ETHOS

There came a time when the conflict between the Brâhmana and Kshatriya ideals was acutely felt. The question was asked, "Is it right for man to spend his life amid the storm and stress of affairs, fighting against the limitations of mundane existence or should one retire from the world to the solitude of the forest and the deeper solitude of his being and strive for self-possession in contact with ultimate existence? Should one live as a Brâhmana or as a Kshatriya? as an introvert, or an extrovert?" This poser confronted India during the later Upanishadic or the epic age. The *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* squarely faces it and offers a remarkable solution.

It clearly enunciates both the ideals and gives independent expression to them. It voices the Vedic, Kshatriya and extroverted ideal when it says :

"Therefore stand up! win for thyself renown.

Conquer thy foes, enjoy the wealth-filled realm."

"Don't be unmanly, O Pârtha! it does not befit thee. Shake off this paltry faint-heartedness! Stand up, O conqueror of foes!"

On the other hand we find the Upanishadic Brâhmana and introverted philosophy of life in expressions like the following :

"He who is happy within, who rejoiceth within, who is illuminated within, that Yogi, becoming the Eternal goeth to the peace of the Eternal."

"He who is alike to foe and friend, to honour and insult, to cold and heat, to pleasure and pain, destitute of attachment; taking equally praise and reproach, silent, content with whatever comes, homeless, firm in mind, full of devotion, is dear to God."

Sometimes there is direct opposition to the *Veda* :

"The *Vedas* deal with the three attributes ; be thou above these three attributes. . ."

"All the *Vedas* are as useful to an enlightened Brâhmana as is a tank in a place covered over with water."

Sometimes there is explicit opposition to the Brahmanical idea :

"Perform action regularly ; for action is superior to inaction."

"Between action and renunciation, action is superior."

"By worshipping Him by performing his duty a man obtains perfection."

The divine idea is sometimes conceived concretely, in the Vedic manner :

"God is the sapidity in waters, the radiance in moon and sun . . . the valour in men ; the pure fragrance of earths and the brilliance in fire."

"The supporter of all, of form unimaginable, refulgent as the sun beyond the darkness."

"That which is declared indestructible by the Veda-knowers."

"Whatever is glorious, good, beautiful, and mighty, understand thou that to go forth from a fragment of God's splendour."

Sometimes the divine idea is presented in the abstract in the manner of the *Upanishad* :

"Being beginningless and without quality, the imperishable Supreme Self, though seated in the body, works not nor is affected."

"The indestructible, the ineffable, the unmanifested, the omnipresent, and unthinkable, the unchanging, immutable, eternal . . ."

What solution does the *Gîtâ* offer for the conflict between the Brâhmana and the Kshatriya ideals? It solves the problem by saying, 'Be a Brâhmana first and a Kshatriya afterwards. Be a Brâhmana within, and a Kshatriya without. Be a *Yogi* and fight. Be a *Sannyasi* and act.' It combines the introverted and extroverted ideals. The *Gîtâ* tells the city to exploit the great discovery of the forest—spiritual harmony (*Yoga*). It tells the man of action to develop the spiritual poise within him. The man of action, the fighter, desires to increase his efficiency

and skill. The *Gîtâ* gives a clue to the highest kind of efficiency and skill : the establishment of the soul in its serenity and power. (*Yogah Karmasu Kausalam*.)

The combination of the Kshatriya ideal of militarism and the Brâhmana ideal of austerity and spiritual elevation was magnificently illustrated in the *Râmâyana*, India's first great art epic. "Know me as devoted to pure Dharma, like the Rishis," says Râma in the first section of the epic, and he discharges his Kshatriya duties in almost perfect conformity with this ideal. In the figure of Râma, wandering dauntlessly in the unexplored forests, bow and arrow in hand, and with his brother Lakshmana, fighting hordes of Râkshasas, and protecting his wife Sitâ and the sages who sought his help, we find a symbol of the very spirit of Kshatriyahood. Kshatriyahood as Varna (caste) is allied to Gârhastya (the household state), as Âsrama (civil state), hence only in a Kshatriya code of life there is a place for love and romance. And in the love of Râma and Sitâ (whom he won by the demonstration of valour) we find the romance dearest to the Indian imagination,—a romance in which the excesses of emotion have been subdued by an ascetic will. The peculiarly ascetic note is struck in the account of their forest life, where the loving couple live a celibate life.

But in spite of its austerity, the Kshatriya ideal dealing with the hard and sometimes rough task of defending the life and liberty of the people, looked rude compared to the Brâhmana ideal which, rejecting the worldly life, came to possess a serene brilliance about it. The Kshatriya had to face the tragedy of existence from which the Brâhmana escaped through his transcendentalism.

The tragic task of the Kshatriya is clearly enunciated in the *Rāmāyana* :

"The (Kshatriya) protector has, in defence of his subjects, to do whatever is necessary, be it cruel or gentle, sinful or vicious."

The *Mahābhārata* is even more explicit. It enjoins on the Kshatriya to slay even those that are nearest and dearest, if they are found ranged against him in a battlefield.

The more the Indian mind admired the serene Brāhmana ideal, the more it shrank from the hardness of the Kshatriya view of life and the sense of reconciliation between the two came to be lost. The realities of the Kshatriya life also were considerably responsible for the general prejudice that was created against it. The ambition of every ruler to become a Chakravartin (emperor) kept the country perpetually engaged in internecine warfare, and the great fratricidal battle of Kurukshetra, on which the story of the *Mahābhārata* was based, must have severely injured not only the numerical strength of the Kshatriya clans but also their very ideals.

##### 5. BUDDHIST PERIOD: VAISYA ETHOS

At the end of the epic period the Kshatriya ideals received the severest blow from a scion of the Kshatriya race—Sākya Sinha, who became Buddha. Lord Buddha attacked everything in Kshatriya ideology,—the ideal of heroism, the epic view of life, the conception of romance. He rejected the compromise between Kshatriya and Brāhmana ethics. He threw the weight of his magnificent personality on the side of the Brāhmana ideal.

Buddha, however, accepted the Brāhmana ideal with two reservations. Of the Brāhmana's ideal of Brahmacharya (self-discipline) and Brahmanvidyā (metaphysics), he rejected the latter and accepted only the former. "By

Brahmacharya the Devas became immortal," said the *Veda*. "By Brahmacharya (self-discipline) man becomes perfect," said Buddha. But he opposed the excesses of Brāhmana asceticism, which seem to have gone too far in his days. He wanted to eliminate conflict from life—conflict that was the *raison d'être* of the Kshatriya ideal. Let there be no resistance to evil, he said; meet anger by non-anger. "I shall look on all beings," said the Rishi in the *Veda*, "with the eye of a friend." Buddha wanted to make no reservation in the application of the ideal; all forms of life he wanted to be treated alike.

Buddha preached Brahmanism without Brahman (God). "I call him a Brāhmana," he says in the *Dhammapadam*.

"Who has laid by the rod, who does not injure or kill any animal moving or non-moving"; "who is pure as the bright moon, who is undisturbed and serene, who has given up the desire of life"; "who having forsaken desires has left his home and become a wanderer."

Buddha built a new Brāhmanahood on the basis of this gospel—the "Aryan Path," as he called it—by admitting into it everybody who wished to practise the ideal, irrespective of his former caste or creed. The ideal found a concrete form in the institution of the Sangha. Thus the Brāhmana ideal, shorn of its transcendentalism, had a new career under the inspiration of Lord Buddha's personality.

To the lay Buddhist, it was the Vaisya ideal of non-violence rather than the Brāhmana ideal of asceticism in his creed that made a special appeal. The Vaisya caste seems to have been particularly drawn to Buddhism, as it was drawn to the other similar creed, Jainism, contemporaneous with Buddhism. The virtue by which the Vaisya distinguished himself was not austerity; it was

liberality. The Buddhist as well as the Jain spiritual order derived much benefit from the munificent gifts of the Vaisya.

It will not be far wide of the mark to say that the Vaisya ethics dominated the Buddhist age.

#### 6. PURANIK PERIOD : SUDRA ETHOS

The Puranik age which partly synchroized with and partly succeeded the Buddhist epoch converted the poetry of the *Veda* and the metaphysics of the *Upanishad* into mythology and legend, with a free admixture of historical material. By this time the homogeneous Aryan race had mixed itself up with the vast concourse of humanity through the length and breadth of the Indian peninsula in various degrees of intimacy and their simple spiritual culture become composite in its structure, affiliating, in various degrees of cohesion, the faiths and beliefs of the non-Aryan tribes. Sapta-Sindhu, that had widened into Aryāvarta, now widened still further into what came to be called Hindustan, through the process of Aryanization that had begun right from the times of the *Rigveda* with the exhortation, 'Aryanize the world' (Krinyantu Visvam Aryam) and received tremendous momentum in the Buddhist age, when monks carried the ideal of "Aryan Path" not only to every corner of India, but also to different parts of the world outside. But the extension of the spiritual culture of the Aryan was obtained at a considerable sacrifice of its intensity and power.

A general spirit of decadence was manifest in the religious thought of the Puranik age. The old spiritual vigour, audacity, self-confidence and joyousness had gone. The decadent mentality was in evidence in the theory of Kali Yuga, the iron age, in which high and mighty

things could not be done, and in a general spirit of pessimism and fatalism.

One very important feature of Puranik cults was the idea of personality attributed to the Divinity. Three rival conceptions of God are found in this age : God as Creator—Brahmā, God as Destroyer—Siva, God as Supporter—Vishnu. The first stood for the Brāhmana view of life, the second for the Kshatriya, and the third for the Vaisya and Sudra. Later the Brahmā idea was left out, and Brāhmana and Kshatriya ideals were united in the cult of Siva, which had for its rival the Vaishnava cult that steadily grew into popularity. Of the Divine Parents, Siva and Parvati, the former represented the Brāhmana ideal of austerity, and the latter the Kshatriya ideal of valour. According to the Puranik legend Pārvati as Durgā led the Devas to victory in a battle against the Asuras. Saivism also harmonized the conception of the Divinity as Mother among the matriarchal Dravidians with the conception as Father among the patriarchal Aryans. Throughout the Puranik and Middle Ages the Kshatriya clans were followers of Saivism. Among Saivas there were even Brāhmanas who took up the military career.

The Vishnu cult emphasized peace and grace. "The steady-minded people always view the ultimate abode of Vishnu", says the *Veda*. Serene bliss emanating out of a quiet and beneficent mode of living was the aim of Vaishnava idealism.

The introduction of personality in religion resulted in the creation of great plastic arts,—architecture and sculpture. The beautiful land of India was made lovelier by fine Buddhist, Jaina, and Hindu temples, and many of these had splendid images installed in them. Architecture was reinforced by decorative sculpture and painting. Music and

even dancing came to play their part in worship.

In its early stages Vaishnavism centred in the Vedic conception. And through the Avatâr theory, great figures of national history were connected with the Vishnu idea. Râma was taken as an incarnation of Vishnu. Krishna, the powerful ally of the Pândavas, was believed to be Vishnu incarnate. Buddha himself was taken as the last Avatâr but one of Vishnu.

Later the Vaishnavas' discarded the Kshatriya Krishna for the more fascinating figure of the youthful Vaisya Krishna of Vrindâvan, brought up in a milkman's family, who spent an idyllic life among the cowherds and milkmaids. The love of Krishna and the milkmaids, especially the loveliest among them, Râdhâ, was accepted by the Vaishnavas as the symbol of Divine love. Thus the epic note of Kshatriya ideology gave place to a tender lyricism; feminine grace replaced masculine vigour. The lyric tradition in Sanskrit poetry being always frankly sensual, there was no wonder that the same tendency should characterize religious lyricism as well. The aggressive eroticism of the Vaishnavas came also as a reaction against the rigid asceticism of the Buddhist and the Brâhmana, just as its extreme pacifism was in reaction to Kshatriya hardness.

A self-conscious Sudra ideology made its appearance in Vaishnavism. Religion became self-surrender, self-sacrifice, devotion. Servitude (Dâsya) was formulated as a spiritual attitude. Worship took the place of self-realization. The Guru (preceptor) instead of being a spiritual guide became a spiritual authority, and assumed, in the eyes of the disciple, the status of the Divinity Himself.

Buddhism itself was moving from the Brâhmana and Vaisya ideal to the

Sudra ideal. The practice of Dharma as laid down by Buddha was replaced by a worship of Buddha himself. The Jâtaka stories preached extreme forms of self-sacrifice (e.g. a man offering himself before a hungry tigress to appease her hunger).

When Sankarâchârya opposed Buddhism it was already in a decadent state. He restored Brahmagyâ (metaphysics) to Buddha's ideal of exclusive Brahmacharya (self-discipline). The transition from Buddhism to Hinduism must have been extremely simple and silent. The Buddhist monks became Brâhmanas, having added metaphysics to their ascetic ideal; the lay Buddhists accepted Vaishnavism, that recognized Buddha himself as one of the incarnations of the Divinity.

Buddha had not taught Brâhmana asceticism in vain. The Brâhmana caste, which absorbed practically the whole of the reconverted monkish order, which in its turn had been recruited from all castes and races, became the most numerous caste group in India. With a large section of society following a non-secular ideal, and many of them taking up a mendicant life, it is not strange that the Purânas should insist so much on the virtue of giving charities to the Brâhmana.

It is notable that while the Brâhmana ideal had a strong champion in Sankarâchârya, the Kshatriya ideal does not appear to have had any case made for it, though it was chiefly this that came to be opposed by Buddha. Nobody is known to have pleaded for the necessity of politics and militarism and said that it was wrong for Asoka to have laid down his arms. The fact was that the pacifist ideal had come to stay. Even the national food underwent a permanent change. The large



majority of Brâhmanas and Vaisyas took to the vegetarian diet.

The Kshatriya ideal lived in the decimated Kshatriya clans, whose ranks, however, were augmented by the accession to the caste of martially employed Sudras and foreign immigrants. It also lived in the deathless verses of the *Râmâyana* and the *Mahâbhârata*, which inspired fresh epics, though of a minor order, including Kalidâsa's *The Line of Raghus*, that revived many memories of Kshatriya valour, and insisted upon purity of moral character as a royal virtue.

#### 7. MIDDLE AGES : VAISYA-SUDRA ETHOS

Neo-Vaishnavism, based on love and lyricism, steadily gained ground among people demilitarized by Buddhism (e.g. in Bengal and Orissa) and itself demilitarized new peoples (e.g. in Gujerat).

Among medieval saints Chaitanya's life illustrated the ideal of lyric ecstasy. Tukârâm and other saints of Maharashtra gave expression to their emotion in mellifluous verses and found a large following among the Vaisya communities. But nowhere was the characteristic Vaishnava feeling of lyric love, corresponding to the love of Râdhâ for Krishna, more sweetly expressed than in the etherial songs of the Rajputani Mirâbâi. While the work of male poets like Jaydeva and Chandidâs continued the classical Sanskrit tradition of erotic lyricism, in the poetry of Mirâ there is the burning intensity of a personal emotion, in which the longings of a youthful female heart have been sublimated into a spiritual ecstasy.

In the South philosophers rather than poets were engaged in the interpretation of the dualistic cult of Bhakti.

Historical circumstances contrived to convert an essentially Bhakti cult, Sikhism, into a militant creed. This is

the first case of the revival of the Kshatriya ideal in a credal and proselytizing form.

Those who preached Râma worship, e.g. Râmdâs in Maharashtra and Tulsi-das in the North, contributed to the maintenance of the Kshatriya spirit. (Though an incarnation of Vishnu, Râma was a Kshatriya and a warrior. In fact, Râma, the slayer of Râvana, corresponds to the Vedic Indra, the slayer of Vritra, and Hanumân was a son of Marut, the Vedic deity).\* Râmdâs preached the Kshatriya and collectivistic idea and had his share of influence in the course of Maratha history.

Saivism itself was affected by the Bhakti cult, as in the Vira-Saiva sect in the South. In Bengal and elsewhere the female aspect of Saivism received special attention and led to the formation of the Sakti cult.

Though the extensive anti-martial tendencies cost India her political liberty, yet the Indian masses were guided by sufficiently sound traditions of spiritual dignity and social order to have been the only people in the world who, having yielded to Moslem rule, did not surrender their religion. It seems miraculous that while Islam made short work of the religion of conquered countries (e.g. Persia, Turkey, Egypt, Afghanistan), Hinduism survived practically intact except in certain regions, more than five hundred years of Moslem rule. And it is in India and not in the essentially Moslem countries that the finest specimens of Moslem architecture, and painting, and a noble Moslem tradition of music are to be found. It is also noteworthy that in the territories reconquered by Hindus from Moslems, no retaliatory measures were taken

\* View expressed by A. A. Macdonell in his *History of Sanskrit Literature*.

against the Moslems' religion; rather the liberty of religious practice was freely allowed. When Sivaji restored a fair Moslem captive of war to her people, saying that had his mother been handsome like her, his features would have been much better (a fact recorded by a Moslem historian), he scored a spiritual triumph over the Moslem victors who had through the centuries showered indignities on women of his own religion; and he showed that he had listened to the *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata* in his early years to some good purposes, and that his worship of the Divine Mother Bhavāni had a practical side also.

#### 8. MODERN RELIGIOUS REVIVALS

In the nineteenth century the impact of Christianity and of Western culture on Hinduism had its natural reactions, and a number of revivalist movements followed. At first Christianity and Western culture were taken as identical, little notice being taken of the fact that the latter, deriving its inspiration from pagan Greece, flourished at the expense of the former. The conflict in European life between Hellenism and Hebraism, which in a larger sense is the conflict between the Aryan and the Semetic outlook on life, was not recognized. Against the Christian ideal, which was allied to the Vaishnava, the Brāhmo Samāj placed the Brāhmana transcendentalism of the *Upanishad*, for which they found Western support in the recent German philosophy of Europe. The Theosophical movement sponsored by Europeans accepted Hinduism in a larger sense than the Brāhmos, and interpreted the spiritual significance of the Puranic sects as well. The work of European orientalists did a great deal to bring to light the vast treasures of ancient wisdom, and their interpretation of the *Vedas*, however

provisional, revealed the contents of what had remained sealed books for centuries.

For the first time since the close of the epic period, a systematic attempt was made to revive the Vedic religion and culture. It was made through the inspiration of a blind recluse, Virajananda, by Swami Dayananda, a Brāhmana Sannyasi from Gujerat, the land of Vaishnavism, though Dayananda came from a Saiva family. The detailed secular and nationalist programme of the Arya Samaj founded by him, and his revival of the long discarded proselytization, point to a Kshatriya ideology characteristic of Vedic culture. No wonder that people of a distinctly Aryan stock and Kshatriya mentality should rally round it.

Near Calcutta, the very centre of Western culture and of nineteenth century agnosticism, there came to live a saint who was faced with the task of solving the whole problem of the reality of religion and of spiritual culture. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa not only defended religion, but inspired an enthusiasm for it which had far-reaching results. He said that spiritual realization was not only a possible theory but an actual fact of his own experience. This meant a repudiation not only of the inferiority complex induced by the impact of Western culture, but also of the inferiority complex created by the theory of Kali Yuga, in which the spiritual realization of the Vedic and Upanishadic ages was believed to be out of date. By insisting on the fundamentals of religion, Ramakrishna showed in his own life a synthesis of conflicting religious attitudes. Swami Vivekananda, who took up his teaching with a creative understanding, accepted the Vedānta philosophy as a clue to the interpretation of all religions, and

brought a Kshatriya spirit to the pursuit of his mission. The Kshatriya energy that Guru Govind applied to political regeneration, Vivekananda wished to apply to spiritual regeneration.

In more recent times Mahatma Gandhi made a remarkable effort to combine Vaisya and Sudra ideology with a Kshatriya and political programme of life. He wanted his followers at once to surrender and to resist. Quite characteristically he found support for his attitude in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. The poet Rabindranath Tagore, born to Upanishadic ideals and deriving his poetical inspiration from medieval Vaishnava lyrics, has been engaged in another task of reconciliation, that between Upanishadic transcendentalism and Vaishnava eroticism. He is at his finest as a poet when he combines the two into a mystic lyric expression.

All the modern revivalist movements

have emphasized the continuity of Indian spiritual culture from the Vedic times. And this wide perspective has naturally brought about a new conception of Hinduism,—that it is the corporate result of the effort of sages and saints through the centuries and includes every religious sect that originated in India. The Hindu Mahāsabhā which represents this ideal is engaged in the task of restoring the Kshatriya attitude of organization and leadership to the enlightened section of the Hindus. The fatal tendencies of the exclusively non-secular, individualistic and introverted Brāhmana ethos and the anti-intellectual, anti-martial and anti-political Vaisya and Sudra ethos, can only be resisted by the conscious development of a collectivistic, practical and extroverted Kshatriya ethos. The ideal remains the same as was preached in the *Gītā*. Be a Brāhmana within and a Kshatriya without, be a Yogi and act.

## THE PLAYER IN THE RÔLE

BY GRACE HALL

Prelude

One slender thread of life He slowly spins,  
And drops it gently, garnering as it goes  
From plane, through plane, the Virtues and the Sins  
Left as the Seeds, for happiness or woes.  
Burdened with these, and clothed in five-fold sheath—  
Through manifested space, air, sky,—to earth  
(Made by Avidyā), comes the little self  
To blunder, and to learn the dross and worth  
Of choice between Reality and pelf,  
The mundane senses, and the Soul beneath.

Act One

Prakriti reigns !  
Samsāra, Mâyā, Vrittis, are the slaves  
That bind him to the wheel of death and birth ;  
And Dharma, Artha, Kāma, are the waves  
That smother him, and keep him sunk to-earth.

## Scene II

Finding all life must end in death and pain,  
 What pleasures him to gain all things that be  
 In this whole world, if re-death comes again?  
 He looks beyond—for Immortality.

## Act Two

Never to perish !  
 What? Where? How? and When  
 Shall search be made to find the hidden key  
 To that locked Door of Knowledge, free to men  
 Who, finding Wisdom, are At One with Me?

## Act Three

Indefinite, extended, multiple,  
 From lives long past, the Karmic Debt unfolds;  
 Dispassionate, yet inescapable—  
 The Law of Perfect Justice always holds.

## Act Four

To know the Self as Ātman ! herein lies  
 Through Super-consciousness, the end and aim.  
 Sat, Chit, Ānanda never dies.  
 Atonement reached, He never more is twain.

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 RELIGIONS: MAIN POINTS OF AGREEMENT

BY SWAMI GHANANANDA

Striking indeed are the results of the study of comparative religion and philosophy, which is coming more and more into vogue at the present day. When done in an impartial and constructive spirit, and not with a view to glorify any religion at the expense of other faiths, such a study reveals how great religious systems have grown in the past and what their elements are. It discloses the points of agreement and difference between religions, and also enables us to explain them. It truly lays the foundation for a better understanding between the various creeds of the world.

What indeed are the points of

similarity between the religions of the world?

When we analyse the elements of any religion, we find that it usually begins with the well-known question of the origin of the universe. We see the sublime and beautiful nature around us—the earth below and the sun and the moon and the stars above. What is the story of this wonderful creation? Every religion answers this question in its cosmological part. This question naturally leads to the second, viz.. What is the First Principle? What existed before the universe came into existence? What is Its nature? The answer to this is given in the portion

of religion relating to the nature of God. Thirdly the question is asked about man himself who forms the microcosm—a part and parcel of this universe. What is man? What is the relation between man and the universe around, as well as between man and his Maker? Fourthly comes the question which concerns everyone, viz., What happens to us after death? What indeed is the difference between one who does not want religion or believe in it, and another who professes and practises it? This question is answered in the eschatological part of every religion. We thus find that the First Principle or the nature of God, Cosmology or the science of creation, the soul of man or his real nature, and Eschatology or the science of life after death, form the subject matter of every religion. This is the first great point of similarity between religions.

Secondly, every religion also recognizes that it should make its followers better and nobler; or in other words, its value consists not in its doctrines and dogmas, its theories about God, soul and salvation, but in its power to refine and mould our character. Every Teacher has laid down rules of conduct for the guidance of his followers, and these have been elaborated in the system of religion that has grown under the inspiration of his personality. The moral and ethical code of all religions contains such universal moral sentiments and ethical precepts as truthfulness, purity, temperance, justice, kindness to men and animals, patience, love, charity etc. It teaches men to strive after moral excellence. It inculcates the Golden Rule to do unto others as we would others do unto us.

It may be asked why all religions emphasize the need for the practice of moral and ethical disciplines. These are intended to purify the mind in

order that it may reflect the purity and peace within. Moral and ethical training has to go hand in hand with spiritual practices for success in religious life. Man must be pure both externally and internally to attain spiritual progress. External purity can be attained by cleansing and other processes, but internal purity which is far more essential than the external can be attained only by the observance of right rules of conduct and morality. These rules in the form of the "Do's" and "Don't's" of its moral and ethical code are enjoined by every religion.

If moral and ethical preparation is necessary for success in spiritual life, what is meant by spiritual life itself? Spiritual life is life of the spirit. It is a third common feature of all religions that they proclaim the existence of a soul beyond body and mind. They tell us that in man there is an undying part called the soul or spirit which does not die with the death of the body, but is imperishable and immortal. They tell us in different words that the soul itself is pure and perfect, but man has made himself impure and imperfect by his own actions in disobedience to spiritual laws, which some religions call God's commandments. The average man does not understand this fact, though he may believe in it; it is due to the limitations of body and mind, which cloud the soul from his vision. Man can realize his spiritual nature by transcending these limitations.

In dealing with the nature of the soul, some religious systems like the Hindu have also treated about the nature of the mind as well as the nature of knowledge. This has resulted in the growth and development of the sciences of psychology and epistemology under such religious systems.

It is worthy of note that Buddhism does not believe in any permanent value

for the soul, and the question of realizing it does not, therefore, arise in that religion. On the other hand, it preaches that man should realize its impermanence to attain the goal of life.

Though religions tell us that man has lost the original purity and perfection of his soul by violating moral and spiritual laws which are often called God's commandments, they show him the path by which he can regain his spiritual nature, and become pure and perfect again. The means and methods of attaining grace or spiritual perfection may be said to form the fourth point of agreement between religions. Now to please God, we must worship Him and live a life in obedience to His commandments. Such worship is done in a variety of ways—with or without the help of symbols, images etc. Religions like Protestantism and Islam emphatically prohibit the worship of God through images, as such extraneous help was evidently abused by men who took them for God Himself. Hence the strong hatred of these religions for what they call idolatry. But let it not be forgotten that images, symbols, and other external aids are but remembrancers of the ideal and the abstract. It is the ideal that is worshipped through the idol, and not the idol itself.

Religions recommend also the worship of Incarnations and Prophets, and saints and holy men. They enjoin on their followers pilgrimages to holy places and observance of similar means for their benefit. So universal are these that we find them enjoined even by Buddhism and Jainism which deny God.

It is also remarkable that all religions have discovered the glory and potency of sacred names or mystic formulae. Buddhism and Jainism also believe in their efficacy. Their repetition is considered a valuable practice by all systems of religions in the world.

Fifthly, religions provide man with the means and methods of purifying and more or less exercising his will, intellect and heart during the course of his spiritual evolution, by laying greater or less emphasis on one or more of these mental faculties according to his temperamental tastes and inclinations, and thus enabling him to culture them. This results in an intense expression of his personality through the growth and development of his faculties. And as education itself means the 'drawing out' of these faculties and unfoldment of the inner self, religious culture may be said to be the fulfilment of all education. True education in the real sense of the word is incomplete without spiritual culture.

Though scope has been given in every religion for the exercise of the faculties of the mind and their purification, the extent of the scope differs from one religion to another. If the emphasis is more on will, the religion becomes more active in type, and suits followers of an active temperament; if on intellect, it becomes predominantly a path of discrimination, with a highly developed system of philosophy and metaphysics, and suits those adherents who are marked by distinctly intellectual tendencies; if on emotion, it bears a strong emotional impress, and suits those votaries richly endowed with feeling.

Sixthly, every religion consists of four parts, viz., mythology and rituals, philosophy and higher spiritual disciplines. Of these the first two may be said to have been intended for the masses, just as the last two are for the enlightened and cultured minds. This does not mean that mythology and rituals are valueless for the learned; they contain nuggets of gold which require but a little polishing to bring out their lustre. They have a philosophical background and breathe a religious atmosphere. They have successfully

democratized those truths of religion and philosophy, which would otherwise have remained inaccessible to the masses. They may be called the kindergarten of religion, and it is but few that can afford to forego the benefit that can be derived from them in a greater or smaller measure. Study of mythology forms a preparation for the performance of rituals and ceremonials. If mythology is for the unsophisticated, philosophy is for the more advanced. Rituals and ceremonials form the practical part of mythology, whereas meditation and other higher spiritual exercises are intended for the realization of truths preached by philosophy. Mere study of the theoretical part of a religion, whether it be popular mythology or intricate philosophy, can never take us to the goal; unless we undergo a practical course with great steadfastness and devotion, we cannot realize God.

It may be asked, "What does the practice of religion lead us to?" The answer to this is furnished by all religions, and forms their seventh point of agreement. They all tell us that as a result of worship, prayer, and other forms of spiritual disciplines, man reaches a plane beyond this world, beyond his mind or intellect, and comes face to face, as it were, with certain facts or truths, which he could never have sensed with the senses, nor perceived with the mind or the intellect. In other words, he attains the superconscious state. What has been called revelation or inspiration, or God teaching man or speaking to him as to a beloved son, is possible only when man elevates himself to that exalted plane. The state of superconsciousness is called Samâdhi by the Hindu, Nirvâna by the Buddhist, peace that passeth all understanding by the Bible, and is known by other terms in other Scriptures.

Superconscious realization being the

goal of all religious practices, it is obvious that the Prophet or Teacher of every Scripture has attained it in an abundance and to a degree undreamt of by ordinary mortals. This, then, is another point of similarity between religions, viz., that superconscious realization of a high order, of a profound and extraordinary character, is the criterion of a Prophet or a Teacher, a seer or a free soul, and such realization forms the central core of every religion. When great Teachers or Prophets or a group of seers or perfected men attained the superconscious state, they had high spiritual truths revealed to them. These were taught by them and preserved by men, being transmitted by word of mouth or set down in writing. Thus came the Scriptures of every religion, which are reverently studied by its adherents, and which form its great authority.

It is, however, but natural that the followers of a religion do not understand the truths of the Scriptures as clearly as the immediate disciples of the Prophet or Teacher who originally taught them. Hence in every religion theologians and philosophers arose, who commented upon the Scriptures. A system of philosophy that has grown round the Scriptures of any religion is unlike the speculative and discursive philosophy of the West today, but highly intuitive and practical; it prepares the ground for the practice of the religion.

All religions with their systems of theology and philosophy consider the realization of God as the *summum bonum* of life and culmination of man's endeavours. Every religion, therefore, preaches that man's life should be so ordered and lived that he may ultimately reach the Divine goal. This has resulted in the growth and development of cultures and civilizations which have been influenced and moulded by

the spirit of religious teachings to a greater or less extent. Poetry, painting, music, sculpture and architecture—all these have been employed by religions as handmaids to serve a spiritual end.

Facts relating to Teachers or Prophets and the Scriptures, to theology and philosophy, and to the characteristic type of culture and civilization under every religion may be set down as the eighth common feature of religions.

We saw that the attainment of super-consciousness which comes with the realization of the Personal God or the Impersonal Absolute is the culmination of all spiritual practices. Now what is the state of the soul during realization which is the greatest theme of every religion? All systems proclaim that the soul experiences either its affinity with the Personal God or its unity with the Impersonal Absolute, in the state of superconsciousness. This, then, forms the ninth common feature of religions. In monistic religions of the Advaita Vedānta and Sulism, unity of the soul with the Godhead is boldly proclaimed. In the non-monistic systems, the soul is considered a part of God, or as existing in some sort of relationship with the Creator, like servant and Master, son and Father, and so on. It may be observed in passing that the Indian systems have a well-elaborated metaphysical literature dealing with the relation of soul with God.

Tenthly, the conception of the relation of the soul of man to his Maker has, in the case of all religions, spiritualized the conception of the relation of man to man. God being impartial, all men are equal in His eyes, despite the inequalities of life for which they alone are responsible. Every religious system, therefore, has exercised and is still exercising a potent influence on the social and collective life of its followers. They are not chance companions in the

journey of life, but spiritual sisters and brothers marching on a religious pilgrimage and bound for a divine destination. All religions preach the unity of life and solidarity of mankind, and when this doctrine is translated into practice, it results in the formation of large communities and great brotherhoods. Usually man's sense of unity and brotherhood is confined to the fold of the religion or sect to which he belongs.

Why is the sense of brotherhood limited to one's own religion or sect? A consideration of this question leads us to yet another feature common to all religions, viz., every religion preaches a definite path of its own. Every great Prophet or Incarnation has emphatically proclaimed, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Such teachings may be considered as the positive part of a religion. But every religion has also a negative part, which speaks of hell-fire and damnation, eternal or otherwise, for the stragglers. This is intended to prevent the followers from straying into other folds. This, then, is the eleventh point of similarity.

Last, but not least, is the most interesting and to the students of comparative religion and philosophy the most instructive feature common to all religions. It is a matter for agreeable surprise that comparative religion and philosophy proves beyond doubt that every religion possesses an unmistakable element of catholicity and broad-mindedness in a greater or less degree—a generous and hospitable attitude towards other religions. The unique attitude of Hinduism has already been dealt with. The Scriptures of other religions also bear testimony to this fact.

A passage from the Buddhist Scriptures reads : "The root of religion is to reverence one's own faith and never to revile the faith of others. My doctrine



makes no distinction between high and low, rich and poor. It is like the sky; it has room for all, and like water it washes all alike." The Sutta Nipāta tells us that Buddha condemned the tendency prevalent among the religious disputants of his day to make a display of their own doctrines and damn those of others. He also held in high respect the Brāhmanas who led the truly moral life. He asks his followers to avoid all discussions which are likely to stir up discontent among the different sects. One of Asoka's rock edicts, the theme of which is religious toleration, says, "The King, beloved of the Gods, honours every form of religious faith, but considers no gift or honour so much as the increase of the substance of religion; whereof, this is the root, to reverence one's own faith and never to revile that of others. Whoever acts differently injures his own religion while he wrongs another's." "The texts of all forms of religion shall be followed under my protection." (The Twelfth Rock Edict). Commenting on these noble sentiments, Professor Radhakrishnan rightly says: "The Hindu and the Buddhist rulers of India acted up to this principle with the result that the persecuted and the refugees of all great religions found shelter in India. The Jews, the Christians, the Parsees were all allowed absolute freedom to develop on their own lines. Yuan Chwang reports that at the great festival of Prayāga, King Harsha dedicated on the first day a statue to the Buddha, another to the sun, the favourite deity of his father, on the second, and to Siva on the third. The famous Kottayam plates of Stanu-ravi (9th century A.D.) and the Cochin plates of Vijayaragadeva bear eloquent testimony to the fact that the Hindu kings not only tolerated Christianity but granted special concessions to the professors of that faith. Only the other day

the Hindu prince of Mysore made a gift to the re-building of the Christian Church in his state." (*The Hindu View of Life*)

Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, says: "He alone is a true Hindu whose heart is just, and he only is a good Moham-medan whose life is pure. Be true and thou shalt be free . . . . God will not ask man of what race he is, He will ask what he has done." "Love the saints of every faith. Put away your pride. Remember the essence of religion is meekness and sympathy." "To him the delusion of whose heart is gone, Hindus and Mussalmans are the same."

The Zoroastrian religion expresses a noble sentiment in the words: "Have the religions of mankind no common ground? Is there not everywhere the same enrapturing beauty? Broad indeed is the carpet which God has spread, and many are the colours which He has given it. Whatever road I take joins the highway that leads to the Divine."

Judaism also teaches the same broad-mindedness. It says: "Have we not all One Father, hath not One God created us?" (*Mat. II. 10*) "Thou shalt not vex a stranger nor oppress him, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." (*Exod. XXII. 21*). Even the Egyptians by whom the Israelites had been so mercilessly treated were to be requitted with charitable forbearance. "Thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian, because thou wast a stranger in his land" (*Deut. XXIII. 7*). The law knew no difference between the Jew and the Gentile.

In the Christian Scriptures it is written: "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that revereth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him." "He hath made of one blood all the nations of the earth."

About the diversity of religions, the *Koran* says : "To everyone we have given a law and a way. And if God had pleased, He would have made you all one people (professing one religion). But He hath done otherwise that He might try you in that which He has severally given unto you ; wherefore press forward in good works. Unto God shall ye return and He will tell you that concerning which you disagree."

Says the Prophet of Islam, "There is no compulsion in religion ; the right way is in itself distinguished from the wrong" (*Koran* ii. 258). "Say thou, O ye who disbelieve, I do not worship what ye worship, nor do ye worship what I worship, neither will I worship what ye worship, neither will ye worship what I worship . . . ye have your religion and I have my religion." (*Ibid* cix) "Abuse not those whom they call on beside God, for then they may abuse God openly in their ignorance." (*Ibid* vi, 108).

In fact the many points of similarity between the teachings of the world's different prophets and teachers make one inclined to think that if they were all to meet today, they would embrace one another in mutual love and respect, and pass into a state of God-consciousness in their ecstatic joy. They would certainly be shocked at the religious feuds and dissensions between their numerous followers. So striking are the points of agreement between the various religions as to suggest that in many particulars they have copied from one another. They all owe their origin to the superconscious realizations of the several prophets and teachers, and their teachings help one to reach the spiritual plane. The language of nations, their customs and manners are many ; but the language of the soul which finds expression through them is but one. The difference between the religions of the world is but one of expression, not of substance.

## CRITICAL REMARKS ON THE IDEA OF THE ABSOLUTE, AS FOUND IN HEGEL AND SANKARA

BY DRUPAD S. DESAI, M.A., LL.B.

So far,\* our attempt has been to study and understand what Hegel and Sankara had to say with regard to the idea of the Absolute. Now, we may fitly pass on to review the whole thing critically .

We propose to criticize Hegel only, inasmuch as we maintain that his is a very unsatisfactory, untenable position. If we want to think out as philosophers, at all, if as philosophers,

we must go to the root of thoughts and things, either skepticism of the Humian type—or, of the Buddhistic *Sunyavāda* type,—or Absolutism, of the rigorous, unqualified type, such as Sankara has given to us, offers itself as the only legitimate conclusion for us to accept and act upon. Attempts to build such halfway houses, as found in Hegel and others, when they speak of system, Identity-in-Difference, Degrees of Reality and so on, are all attempts, we believe, to build on sandy foundations, not on the solid rock of

\* *Hegel's Idea of the Absolute and Sankara's Idea of the Absolute published in Prabuddha Bharata, April and June, 1936 respectively.*

a genuine, thorough-going, searchingly critical philosophical insight.

Skepticism, of course, is out of question, altogether. We need not even stop here to discuss it at any more length. We may simply point out how untrue to itself it is. "A single thought, a single word, a single movement of head or heart, is sufficient to destroy absolute skepticism."

Sankara's position, therefore, we venture to hold, is, in the last analysis, the only one that is possible and tenable. Hegel, we are of opinion, has stopped short in the middle, and failed to follow out his position to its logical conclusion. Otherwise, a frank and candid thinking out of his position to its logical conclusion would lead us to no other result but the one to which Sankara has led us. If we see the universe whole, if there is a plane of experience where experience is coincident with Being, with Reality as it truly is, then, surely, Space, Time, Matter, Evil, striving and struggling—all, all must disappear, and we should see only the One, Eternal, Perfect, Unchanging, Spiritual Unity, the Brahman.

Having said this much by way of general prefatory remarks, we now proceed to criticize Hegel in some detail. In order that this detailed criticism of ours may be brief and relevant, we propose to proceed by giving, first, a résumé of the main points involved in Hegel's treatment of the problem under discussion, and then offer our criticisms on the same.

#### HEGEL ON THE NATURE OF THE UNITY CONSTITUTING THE ABSOLUTE

His views on this problem lay bare before us the following main points, which we shall criticize :

- I. Reality is a system,
- II. Reality is a graded system,

III. Reality is a system of opposites, and

IV. The Real is the Rational, and the Rational the Real.

The first three points may be said to have been already discussed, but only partially and in the form of side remarks, while dealing with Sankara's idea of the Absolute. We will not repeat those remarks here, therefore. We will add only some additional critical remarks thereon.

(I) The Absolute is a harmonious whole, a differentiated unity. The whole and the individuals into which it is differentiated are in harmony, because it is the inherent nature of both to be in such harmony. A question may be raised as against this, however, that if the correlation and parallelism are so precise and infallible, it certainly ceases to be a system of opposites at all, at any rate. How can we, then, speak of any opposition or contrast being still there?

Next, let us criticize the concept of Identity-in-Difference. The Absolute, it is said, is Identity-in-Difference. This, we believe, is a misnomer. There can be either Identity or Difference, or the Identity alone real and the Difference unreal. For we have no experience of Identity-in-Difference. It is really inconceivable that, at the same time and in the same sense, both identity and difference should co-exist in the manner in which it is supposed to do. Identity alone gives meaning to difference. Even the Law of Contradiction by itself would be meaningless and invalid, if the underlying essential unity were not there to which opposite attributes could be applied. In themselves, contradictory assertions cannot exist as true. We are able to recognize differences everywhere, because "we" that experiences those differences is the same, continuous "we", all along. But

this does not mean at all and in any sense that what we experience every moment is Identity-in-Difference. The differences are so many detached and passing experiences only, which derive their meaning and significance only from their being experienced by one and the same underlying identity. If the differences are to be taken as real in the same sense as the identity is real, philosophically we shall be thrown back upon a pluralistic position of a very naïve type.

(II) Hegel's doctrine of Degrees of Reality cannot be adequately criticized without a reference to his doctrine of Degrees of Truth.

Starting, as Hegel did, from the irreducible minimum of the Subject—Object relation in knowledge, it was just natural for him not to speak of the distinction of Truth and Falsehood, but only of Degrees of Truth. Ordinary knowledge, viz. that the object is independent of the subject, and exists by its own right, is not false, according to him, but contains only the lowest degree of truth.

We are of opinion that philosophy, as strict philosophy, should have nothing to do with such a view embodied in such a doctrine. It is the supreme task of philosophy to give us certitude or truth that is one and absolute, and admits of no doubt at any time. The Vedânta alone, we believe, has succeeded in giving us this final certitude, the certitude of the Self.

For ordinary usage, too, it would be a very loose way of talking if we were to talk in terms of degrees of truth. For, in that case, we would be using the word "truth" in different senses at different times. Even there, therefore, the way can be allowed—and is allowed mostly—as a cloak for our ignorance. Much less can it be countenanced in the field of philosophy. For, philo-

sophy is not simply common sense taken wholly on trust; it is, rather, common sense criticized and corrected, wherever necessary.

There, indeed, cannot be two senses of the word "Real" similarly, used as it suits us, and as convenience requires it.

(III) How can opposites be united into a system at all, passes comprehension. Because in being brought together to form a system, the opposites must first cease to be in the nature of opposites.

Again, Hegel here seems to think of the Absolute as a process, as a Becoming, not as a Being. As for our criticism of the position that the Absolute is a process, it has already been touched upon in our treatment of Sankarâchârya's idea of the Absolute. Here we will add some other critical remarks.

Hegel starts with the category of 'Being', no doubt; but his notion of 'Being' is such as cannot be philosophically justified, and hence he reverts to a synthesis in 'Becoming' process. He conceives of 'Being' as objective content; and, therefore, finds that Universal Being, which is Being in general, i.e. to say, without any objective content, must be equated with pure nothing. Here, however, a question may well be asked: "Does he then, mean to say that it is from our experiences of things and processes that we, by abstraction, come to the idea of Being?" If it were so, we may say that it is a wrong way of stating facts. For, even Hegel himself must admit that for this kind of abstraction to be possible, the things and processes to be experienced and compared must be posited to be there first.

Again, absolute Becoming is itself a pure abstraction. We cannot understand what innate power resides in the

two opposites of Being and Non-Being of Hegel, which compels him, or any one else who follows him, to leap forward to Becoming. In themselves and as opposites, Being and Non-Being must cancel themselves, that is all.

(IV) If the rational is the real in the sense in which Hegel takes it, it becomes impossible for us to account for the many irrationalities existing in the universe. The rationality of the Real, therefore, must be understood in this sense only that "the real can be reduced to a statement of ultimate and irreducible fact". And this is really the sense in which the Vedânta has understood the rationality of the ultimately Real.

Our conclusion is that Hegel's Idea of the Absolute and Sankara's Idea of the Absolute stand poles apart, and that Sankara's is the really satisfactory and philosophically justifiable idea.

There is, however, a tendency in some quarters\* to mingle up Hegel and Sankara indiscriminately. We are not concerned with any criticism thereon here. But we would like to opine that if Hegel is to be compared to any of the Vedantic philosophers at all, he may be compared to Râmânujâ only.

\* We are referring here more especially to Chapter 4 of "Studies in Vedânta" by V. J. Kirtikar

## BUDDHA'S GOSPEL OF SUFFERING

By SWAMI ASESHANANDA

The first and fundamental principle of Buddhism is the recognition of the existence of suffering. It is suffering that made Buddha renounce the world. The key-note of his lyre harps on this one tune—the misery of man. For this reason Buddha has sometimes been charged with preaching a pessimistic doctrine. No doubt, he emphatically proclaims the existence of pain. But he does not stop there. Immediately our attention is drawn to a practical point—the way of escape from misery or, in his own words, the deliverance from suffering. Buddha was not a mere visionary, nor like Heraclitus, the weeping philosopher, a man given to repentance and idle bemoaning. He was a practical idealist with a robust faith and indomitable confidence in the innate power of every soul. He viewed religion from, essentially, a pragmatic standpoint. His emphasis was mainly on life and experience than on vain

speculation. Consequently, we do not find in his teachings elaborate discussions on metaphysical entities with the discursive logic of a shrewd arguer. He does not enlighten us on the origin of this universe or on the nature of the "First Cause". Nor does he mention the name of a Personal God—an all-compassionate Deity in whose arms we may repose for protection and seek shelter from torments and woe. He does not offer the promise of miraculous saving by an extra-cosmic Being by a single stroke of his hand. He has placed before us a simple programme. The plan of his campaign is a moral battle which man must wage alone and from which he can come out a victor if he wills. He has to depend solely on his own self and exercise his individual capacity to the fullest extent. Knowing that death is better than an idle vegetating life he must fight without trepidation or fear. But he does not ad-

vocate any extreme asceticism. The middle path is the best way. This he discovered from his own personal experience. He saw the futility of self-mortification and torture of the flesh. He did not teach any lesson which he himself had not followed. What solace can hopes of a post-mortem felicity render unto a man dying of starvation? It does not require any arguments to convince or a metaphysics to prove that "old age is suffering, sickness is suffering, and death is suffering." He fully grasped the pitiable condition of mortal beings and experimented on the ways of escape. Not for his own salvation did he discard the throne and leave the sweet shelter of an affectionate home. It was in obedience to a greater call—the alleviation of the misery of the innumerable multitude whose mortal sorrows he shared as his own, that he renounced the ordinary joys of life. Their heart-rending wails made him restless. Their cry of agony drew tears from his sympathetic eyes. But he did not lose himself in sheer repentance. The gloomy picture of ugly disease and death appeared before him in flesh and blood. In the presence of that distressing scene, like ordinary pessimists, he did not give himself up to vain despair and grew apathetic towards the concerns of life. But as a hero, he definitely entered upon the path to give a relentless fight. Alone, single-handed, he placed himself amidst the thick of the battle and valiantly stood against all oppositions—the trials and temptations of nature. After six years of hard persistent struggle he came out triumphantly victorious, and the battalions of Māra suffered an ignominious defeat. The example of this manly enterprise cannot but inspire even a weak soul to dynamic activity. Its vitalizing influence will be a sure incentive to healthy pursuits and fruitful endeavour. That

without struggle no glory can be attained is the lesson that is clear and vibrant from every page of his life.

The obvious aim of the mighty 'Tathāgata' was to put an end to all the misery that is inextricably mixed up with the lot of man. Like an expert physician he has not only diagnosed the disease but has framed a prescription that will bring about cure. What is the treatment that he has made for the eradication of this world-malady? All sufferings spring from ignorance—from the fever of 'Tanha' or desire. It is the sublimation of desire, the annihilation of this thirst for individual life that will lead to the deliverance from pain. The craving for self-preservation and for personal happiness is at the root of all miseries which flesh is heir to. True life is a life dedicated for all. It blossoms in the mastery of ego-centric life and on the conquest of this little fleshly existence. A man who lives solely for himself can never attain to Nirvāna. Annihilation of desire is not Nirvāna as is popularly understood. It is tantamount to dry barrenness culminating in the dullness of death. By choking up the very spring of action it makes the heart dreary and void. Where there are no higher incentives, life is sure to become dark and gloomy with signs of lamentation. Nirvāna has been misinterpreted by some writers as complete extinction. They opine that Buddhism is a religion of despair which can hardly promote civilization or contribute to social progress. But if we appraise the teacher from his own words, he has never given vent to anti-social ideas. On the contrary, his remarks are pregnant with lofty emotions for universal good. "Rediscovering himself everywhere and in everything, the sage embraces the whole world in the sentiment of peace, compassion and intense

love"—This should be the motto of every follower that will enlist himself under his banner. Decidedly Buddha does not preach a cult of melancholy broodiness. A negative view of life which is barren of all instincts, finds no place in his creed. The very life of the "Enlightened One" is a standing challenge against the statement and proves the utter falsity of the contention that Buddha was a pessimist and his whole philosophy was other-worldly. The sage who devoted forty years of his useful career to strenuous, untiring service and then died like a steed in harness by the side of a road while carrying his message of hope to the door of the lowly and the poor can scarcely be designated as a bloodless pessimist and a listless dreamer. In fact, the story of his life-long adventure presents only the picture of a man drunk deep in love and one who suffered crucifixion for the cause of agonized humanity. To stigmatize the sublime teachings of Buddha as a cult of despair which has undermined civilization and social progress is extremely undeserving, and it sounds the depth of the ignorance of the estimator. Who has seen a greater man, a man of more active and energetic habits than the saint of Kapilavastu? Any impartial student of history will testify from his eventful career of eighty summers, the glory of the Asokan empire and its vitalizing influence on China, Japan and other distant lands from sea to sea, the contribution of Buddhism to arts, painting and sculpture that a religion of despondency can never produce such benevolent deeds of human welfare and influence its civilization. More than two thousand years have rolled away in the eternal flow of time. Momentous

changes have taken place all over the world. Powerful dynasties have disappeared with their monumental towers crumbled into dust. Old cities have have given place to new ones and smiling countries have been converted into sandy deserts. Great names of ruling statesmen and political magnates have sunk into oblivion. But the name of 'Bhagavân Buddha' has not yet been forgotten. Millions of the citizens of the globe feelingly remember him even today. What was the message that he delivered? What was the power behind his creed by which his missionaries could conquer so many nations on earth without shedding a drop of blood? Nor by force nor by sending armaments of human destruction Buddhism was spread far and wide from the Pacific to the Mediterranean. It was through love and sacrifice, peace and conciliation and above all an unshaking faith in the words of the Master that his ambassadors could win away the hearts of men and convert them to his consoling faith. It is told that when Buddha was on the threshold of Nirvâna he manfully retraced his steps and undertook a vow not to enter into it as long as there was a single soul, unredeemed and subject to ignominious suffering. The exhorting appeal of the teacher is still ringing clear in our ears—"Go ye Bhikkus and wonder forth for the good of the many and for the welfare of the many. Hesitate not to sacrifice your own salvation for the betterment of the world. Proclaim the doctrine glorious by living a life of holiness, perfect and pure." Thrice holy is the day on which the Blessed One came and proved by his life that the service of man was the only religion, most dear to his heart.

# MAYAVATI CHARITABLE DISPENSARY

REPORT FOR 1935

We have great pleasure in placing before the public the record of work done by this institution during 1935. It has been doing its humble work of service among the hill people for the last 31 years through its Outdoor and Indoor Departments. The institution is becoming more and more popular with the people with the lapse of years as the comparative chart given here shows.

Year	No. of Patients	
	Outdoor	Indoor
1925	3,162	35
1931	6,165	149
1932	7,489	149
1933	7,900	140
1934	10,494	183
1935	14,344	189

The Dispensary is within the precincts of Advaita Ashrama and is conducted with great efficiency under the charge of a monastic member of the Ashrama, whose knowledge of Medical Science qualifies him for this work. Patients come to the Dispensary from a distance of even one or two days' journey. *The Doctor also goes round the villages to render service to such patients as are not able to come to the Indoor Hospital.* Service is rendered to all irrespective of caste, creed or sex.

The total number of patients relieved during the year at the Outdoor Dispensary was 14,344, of which 10,905 were new cases and 3,439 repeated cases. Of these new cases, 4,446 were men, 2,594 women and 3,865 children. In the Indoor Hospital the total number treated was 189, of which 146 were discharged cured, 8 left treatment, 31 were relieved, and 4 died. Of these 114 were men, 58 women, and 22 children.

## STATEMENT OF DISEASES (INDOOR INCLUDED)

Dysentery	...	...	260
Enteric Fever	...	...	6
Gonococcal Infection	...	...	46
Syphilis	...	...	68
Leprosy	...	...	8
Malarial Fever	...	...	886
Influenza	...	...	415
Pneumococcal Infection	...	...	46
Pyrexia of Uncertain Origin	...	...	277
Rheumatic Fever	...	...	11
Tuberculosis of the Lungs	...	...	16
Worms	...	...	197
All Other Infective Diseases	...	...	75
Anæmia	...	...	28
Rickets	...	...	9
Other Diseases due to Disorder of Nutrition and Metabolism	...	...	24
Diseases of the Ductless or Endocrine Glands	...	...	267
All other General Diseases	...	...	120
Diseases of the Nervous System	...	...	360
Diseases of the Eye	...	...	2,987
Diseases of the Ear	...	...	209
Diseases of the Nose	...	...	70
Diseases of the Circulatory System	...	...	11
All Diseases of the Respiratory System except Pneumonia and Tuberculosis	...	...	1,023
Diseases of the Stomach	...	...	263
Diseases of the Intestine	...	...	253
Diseases of the Liver	...	...	266
All other Diseases of the Digestive System	...	...	777
Acute or Suppurative Inflammation of the Lymphatic Glands	...	...	32
Acute or Chronic Nephritis	...	...	27
Other Diseases of the Urinary System	...	...	57
Other Diseases of the Generative System	...	...	68
Diseases of the Organ of Locomotion	...	...	424
Diseases of the Areolar Tissues	...	...	60
Inflammation (Ulcerative)	...	...	458
Other Diseases of the Skin	...	...	649
All other Local Diseases	...	...	150
Injuries (Local and General)	...	...	62
TOTAL			10,905
Operations : General	...	...	65
Injections	...	...	1,118



## SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS FOR 1935

RECEIPTS				EXPENDITURE			
		Rs.	A. P.			Rs.	A. P.
Last Year's Balance	...	10,311	5 10	Medicine and Diet	...	613	10 0
Subscription and Donations	...	1,255	6 0	Doctor's Maintenance and Travelling	...	395	0 0
Building Fund	...	2,000	0 0	Instruments etc.	...	4	14 6
Interest	...	314	5 0	Establishment	...	12	0 0
				Miscellaneous including repairs, postage, etc.	...	78	8 9
				Building Construction			
				(of work done till 31st Dec.)			
				Materials	Rs. 846	9	3
				Ry. Freight			
				etc.	.. 108	1	9
				Labour	.. 352	12	0
						1,307	7 0
TOTAL	...	13,881	0 10	TOTAL	...	2,411	8 3
				BALANCE	...	11,469	8 7

'We cordially thank all our donors, who by their continued support have made it possible for us to be of some service to humanity in these distant hills. Our thanks are specially due to Mr. P. C. Bhargava, Lahore, for a donation of Rs. 2,000 towards Building Fund. Mr. J. M. Billimoria, Bombay, and Mr. P. K. Nair, Feroke, for donations of Rs. 500 and Rs. 353 respectively towards the upkeep of the Dispensary. Our thanks are also due to Messrs. Dr. Thilo & Co., Germany; Iwaki & Co., Japan; Medical Supply Concern, Ltd., Calcutta; The Calcutta Chemical Co., Ltd., Calcutta; Sarkar Gupta & Co., Calcutta; Bengal Chemical & Pharmaceutical Works Ltd., Calcutta; Lister Antiseptics & Dressing Co., Ltd., Calcutta; The Anglo French Drug & Co., Ltd., (India), Bombay; Bengal Immunity Co., Ltd., Calcutta; Jatindra Chemical & Pharmaceutical Works, Calcutta; The Bombay Surgical Co., Bombay; E. Merck, Germany; Haverro Tradings Co., Holland; Chemical Works of Gedcon Richter Ltd., Hungary; Chemische Pharmazeutische Aktiengesellschaft, Bad, Germany; C. H. Boehringer Sohn A.-G. Chemische Fabrik; Byk-Guldenwerke, Berlin; and Hadensa-Gesellschaft M.B.H. for supplying us their

preparations free; to Messrs. Ranaghat Chemical Works for supplying us their preparations at half price; and also to the Editors of *The Indian Medical Journal*, Calcutta; *The Antiseptic*, Madras, *The Suchikitsa*, Calcutta, for giving us their journals free.

## APPEAL

We appeal to the kind-hearted gentlemen for a Permanent Fund for the maintenance of the Dispensary and its Indoor Hospital of 8 beds. An endowment of Rs. 1,500 will meet the cost of maintaining one bed and an endowment of Rs. 10,000 the cost of maintaining the Outdoor Dispensary.

Donors, desirous of perpetuating the memory of their departed friends or relatives, may do so through this humanitarian work by bearing the costs of any of the above-mentioned wants of the Dispensary.

Any contribution, however small, for the upkeep of the Dispensary and the Indoor Hospital will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the undersigned.

(Sd.) SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA,  
President, Advaita Ashrama,  
P.O. Mayavati,  
Dt. Almora, U.P.

## ATMABODHA

By Swami Siddhatmananda

**निषिध्य निखिलोपाधीन् नेति नेतीति वाक्यतः ।**

**विद्यादैक्यं महावाक्यैर्जीवात्मपरमात्मनोः ॥ ३० ॥**

'नेति नेति' 'Not this, not this' (the gross body is not the Atman, the senses are not the Atman, etc.) इति वाक्यतः according to these sayings (in the Sruti निखिलोपाधीन् all false attributes (of the Atman) निषिध्य negating महावाक्यैः with the help of the Great Sayings (in the Sruti such as तत्त्वमसि etc.) जीवात्मपरमात्मनोः of the individual self and the Supreme Self ऐक्य identity विद्यात् should know.

30. Negating all false attributes according to the teachings 'Not this, not this' (of the Sruti) one should realize the identity between the individual self and the Supreme Self with the help of the Great Sayings<sup>1</sup> (of the Sruti).

<sup>1</sup> Great Sayings—“तत्त्वमसि” (Thou art That), “ब्रह्माहमसि” (I am Brahman), “प्रज्ञानमानन्दं ब्रह्म” (Brahman is Wisdom and Bliss) and “अयमात्मा ब्रह्म” (This self is Brahman)—these four great Vedic dicta are called Mahāvakyas as they proclaim the highest truth, viz., the identity of jiva with Brahman. One should realize this highest truth by the constant meditation of these teachings.

**आविद्यकं शरीरादि दृश्यं बुद्बुदवत् क्षरम् ।**

**एतद्विलक्षणं विद्यादहं ब्रह्मेति निर्मलम् ॥ ३१ ॥**

शरीरादि The body etc. दृश्यं visible objects आविद्यकं arising out of ignorance बुद्बुदवत् like bubbles of water क्षरम् perishable ( च and ) अहं I एतद्विलक्षणं different from these (body and the like) निर्मलम् pure ब्रह्म Brahman इति विद्यात् one should know this.

31. The visible objects such as the body and the like arise out of ignorance and are perishable like bubbles of water. It should be known that I am the pure Brahman different from the body, etc.

**देहान्यत्वात् मे जन्मजराकाश्र्यलयादयः ।**

**शब्दादिविषयैः संगो निरिन्द्रियतया न च ॥ ३२ ॥**

देहान्यत्वात् As ( I am ) different from the body जन्मजराकाश्र्यलयादयः birth, old age, leanness, destruction, etc. मे न (सन्ति) I do not have निरिन्द्रियतया as ( I am ) without the senses शब्दादिविषयैः with the sense-objects such as sound and the like संगः contact च and न no ( मे सन्ति I have ).

32. As I am different from the body I have no birth, old age, leanness, destruction, etc. and as I am without the senses I have no contact with the sense-objects such as sound and the like.

अमनस्त्वाञ्च मे दुःखरागद्वेषभयादयः ।

अप्राणो ह्यमनाः शुभ्र इत्यादि श्रुतिशासनात् ॥ ३३ ॥

अमनस्त्वात् As ( I am ) without mind दुःखरागद्वेषभयादयः pain, attachment, aversion, fear, etc. मे न (सन्नि) I do not have अप्राणो ह्यमनाः शुभ्र इत्यादि 'The Atman is without vital airs and mind, and is pure', etc. श्रुतिशासनात् according to the teachings of the Sruti.

33. As I am without mind I have no pain, attachment, aversion, fear, etc. According to the teachings of the Sruti 'The Atman is without vital airs and mind, and is pure<sup>1</sup>', etc.

<sup>1</sup> 'The Atman . . . . is pure'—Vide Mundaka Upa. II. 1. 3.

निर्गुणो निष्क्रियो नित्यो निर्विकल्पो निरञ्जनः ।

निर्विकारो निराकारो नित्यमुक्तोऽस्मि निर्मलः ॥ ३४ ॥

( अहं I ) निर्गुणः without attributes निष्क्रियः without activity नित्यः eternal निर्विकल्पः absolute निरञ्जनः unstained निर्विकारः unchanged निराकारः formless नित्यमुक्तः eternally free निर्मलः pure अस्मि (I) am.

34. I am without any form, attributes, and activity ; I am eternal, unstained, unchanged, pure, eternally free, and absolute.

अहमाकाशवत् सर्वबहिरन्तर्गतोऽच्युतः ।

सदा सर्वसमः सिद्धो निःसंगो निर्मलोऽचलः ॥ ३५ ॥

अहं I आकाशवत् like the universal space सर्वबहिरन्तर्गतः pervading everything inside and outside अच्युतः imperishable सदा सर्वसमः ever the same under all conditions सिद्धः perfected निःसंगः without any attachment निर्मलः pure अचलः immovable ( अस्मि am ).

35. Like the universal space I am pervading everything inside and outside. I am without any attachment, immovable, imperishable, pure, perfect, and ever the same under all conditions.

नित्यशुद्धविमुक्तैकमखण्डानन्दमद्वयम् ।

सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं यत् परं ब्रह्माहमेव तत् ॥ ३६ ॥

अहमेव Indeed I तत् that परं ब्रह्म Supreme Brahman (अस्मि am) यत् which (is) नित्यं eternal शुद्धं pure विमुक्तं free एकं One अखण्डं undivided अद्वयं without a second आनन्दं bliss सत्यं truth ज्ञानं knowledge अनन्तं infinity.

36. I am indeed the Supreme Brahman which is eternal, pure, free, one, undivided, without a second, knowledge, truth, bliss, and infinity.

एवं निरन्तरकृता ब्रह्मैवास्मीति वासना ।

हरत्यविद्याविक्षेपान् रोगानिव रसायनम् ॥ ३७ ॥

एवं Thus निरन्तरकृता meditated constantly ब्रह्मैवास्मि I am indeed Brahman इति expletive वासना idea रसायनम् रोगानिव like medicines curing diseases अविद्याविक्षेपान् all confusions arising from ignorance हरति destroys.

37. Thus the constant meditation of the idea 'I am indeed Brahman' destroys all confusions arising from ignorance just as medicines cure all diseases.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

*God, Personal and Impersonal* is an unpublished writing of Swami Vivekananda. . . . In *The Problem of an Indian lingua franca* we have discussed some of the recent linguistic developments in the country, which are directly concerned in the matter and have considered the desirability of evolving a common language for the Indians for inter-provincial contact and inter-communal harmony. . . . Prof. G. R. Malkani belongs to the Indian Institute of Philosophy, Amalner. His article on *Relation of Self to Knowledge* convincingly proves how in the self alone the true ideal of knowledge is realized. . . . *Ramakrishna and the Spirit of Service* is the summary of a talk given by Miss Dorothy Stede at the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Celebrations held last March in London under the auspices of the Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Vedanta Society. . . . Prof. Abinash Chandra Bose describes in *Four Currents in Indian Spiritual History* how the fourfold division of society in India began as a mere classification of the four types of occupation found in a civilized society. . . . Swami Ghanananda shows in *Religions: Main Points of Agreement* how the difference between the religions of the world is but one of expression, not of substance. . . . Mr. Drupad S. Desai summarizes after his two articles on the idea of the Absolute as conceived by Hegel and Sankara, published in April and June last, his *Critical Remarks on the Idea of the Absolute as found in Hegel and Sankara*. . . . Swami Asheshananda belongs to the Ramakrishna Order and is a new con-

tributor. His article on *Buddha's Gospel of Suffering* shows how Buddha's faith was far from being based on idle bemoaning and vain speculation.

### REIGN OF DOGMAS IN MODERN LIFE

Myths have profoundly shaped human history in the past. Their power is not yet dead. Multitudes still offer worship at the altars of different jealous Jehovahs. All these votaries of the competing Almighties seek to mould events according to their own lights by ironing out all other considerations. The most Jehovah-like among the modern dogmas are those of the belly and the sex, and one may perhaps add one or two more. They tolerate no rivals and rule out all the other factors in the evolution of civilization. Observant persons must have noticed great similarities between the Marxist and the Freudian doctrines. The Marxists believe in the economic man and the economic interpretation of history. Religion, art, science, literature, and ethics are expressions of the economic urge. They deny spirit and spiritual causation, personality and personal influence. The Freudians similarly almost delight in pointing out that all the prudery, primness, urbanity, philanthropy and humanism of our civilization is mostly, if not wholly, a sublimated manifestation of *libido*. Both of them refuse to set their eyes above the mundane and vulgar; they thrive particularly well in stench and filth. More than anything else they deserve to be called "the philosophy of pigs".

Such pretensions have amply been demonstrated to be hollow. At best they are part-truths. And precisely here lies their perniciousness. Both the Jewish prophets have had such profound hold upon the popular imagination because of the magnificence of their all-comprehensive generalizations resting on some sort of experimental truth. In India we are at present hearing a lot about advanced economic theories backed up with all the dogmatism of a doctrinaire. We believe that the present mechanistic civilization has come to stay and that it has made it necessary and inevitable that a far-reaching reconstruction of the social structure of humanity must take place sooner or later. It may be that justice may demand that the economic organization be changed lock, stock, and barrel. Every noble-hearted person desires to see the end of exploitation and the substitution of co-operation in place of wasteful, break-neck competition. But we pay no homage to the economic Deos. There are things deeper, higher and more important even in the matter of social reconstruction, which cannot be measured in terms of bread and butter. Economics is not the 'sole reality of the situation', nor even the most important one. We need above all a spiritual outlook, a thorough spiritualization of our economics, politics, science, and art. Only a spiritual outlook can offer a sure foundation for a healthier and better order of society. The Indians have inherited an immortal treasure from the past. Amid all the squalor and poverty, oppression and inhumanity one can still hear the faint beat of her national culture and glory. It is only her national culture which holds the promise of a brighter era amid all the darkening shadows that stalk the present world. India is slowly rising from her stupor. She must firmly fix her

gaze on the national ideal and refuse to be side-tracked from it. Economics can never be the sole reality of human life. It has its own field. It cannot stray beyond it. Itself it is incapable of bringing about a change in human instincts. Whatever India has to accept from elsewhere, she must make it racy to her soul. We do not desire the old follies of the West being re-enacted anew on her soil.

### A SCIENTIST'S CLAIM

Some time back Sir C. V. Raman talked to Gandhiji about the merits of science and religion. It was not to be expected that he would shine in it. And we confess that his observations as reported in *Harijan* have been a bit of a puzzle to us. He declared that if there be any God then we must look for Him in the universe; if not, He was not worth searching for. We have not quite understood the import of the remark. Is God first to be proved somehow and then to be sought in the universe? Or is God to be discovered *within* the scheme of the universe alone and not outside it? Pending, however, the discovery of God Sir Raman preferred to remain a theist and protested against being called an atheist. And by way of offering some consolation to poor God-believers he charitably pointed out that the growing discoveries in science appeared to be further and further revelations of God. He wound up by remarking—which by the way affords a glimpse into his religiosity—that religion could not unite men and that science alone offered the best opportunity for fellowship among men. For, are not all men of science brothers?

Not long ago the Indians were treated to a peculiarly felicitous exhibition of brotherly love among the bigwigs of the Indian scientists. But, jesting apart. Nobody disputes that science

is a search after truth. We only want to converse the proposition and say that all search after truth is science. Talking of science in the ordinary sense, can its boast of making brothers of men be sustained? Science reveals truth. But what sort of truth do we get from it? It only makes some dispassionate utterances about the behaviour of phenomena. Doubtless many of its findings clear the fog of ignorance. We do not at all minimize such services. But does it talk of brotherly love, humanism, beauty, and sympathy? Has it anything to say about values? If science is impotent to create them it cannot purify human motives and re-orient human behaviour. At best it can lend plausibility to some of our deeper convictions and emotions. Cold intellectual light never warms up our hearts. Are we not in possession of enough scientific truths for bringing a better world into existence materially,—enough truths capable of providing food, shelter, comfort, peace and health for the entire mankind? What stands in the way? Why science sits powerless to bring about the change? The truth is that science is not fundamental. We apply scientific truths according to our desires. Again in so far as science can be said to have created something approaching value or rather in so far as it has fortified some of our tendencies it can be pointed out that it has more given a new lease to forms of our selfishness and brutality than subdued them. We are not talking of the benefits that science has made possible for man, for science did not supply any good or bad motive in connection with them. Similarly we leave out of consideration the engines of destruction discovered by it. We are considering those theoretical discoveries which have afforded a new basis to our propensities. So judged, it has to some extent de-

humanized some. As instances, we can only briefly refer to the doctrines of the Philosophical Radicals, the Utilitarians, the survival-of-the-fittest-biologists, and to the theories of racial purity, hereditary transmission, racial superiority with all their hideous corollaries of unbridled competition, the devil-take-the-hindmost-attitude, oppression of aliens, minorities, and individuals. Science can compel to shed some false beliefs, but it cannot broaden our sympathies. Bertrand Russell has said somewhere that if you question a scientist in his laboratory about his work, he will give the most rational answer, but if you happen to scratch him outside on some political or economic issues you are likely, in nine cases out of ten, to draw out a most dogmatic pronouncement. Recently in a great gathering of scientists in Germany there were loud talks of pure, Nordic science and vilification of Jewish and other sciences. It was even declared that no similar findings would be arrived at in identical fields by scientists of pure and impure races. Eminent scientists were found to signify their hearty approval to all the resounding nonsense. The scientific West today sits on a powder-magazine. Something more than science is needed to tone down passions. And the pity of it is that religion which only can bring salvation has been mistaken for creeds and dogmas by the vulgar as well as the learned.

#### SCHWEITZER AND THE INDIAN WELTANSCHAUUNG

Dr. Schweitzer's versatility has been an object of amazement to scholars. It is a pity that he has not been able to avoid the common pitfalls that beset the path of the Orientalists. In his latest publication, *The World-view of the Indian Thinkers*, he repeats some of the stock criticisms of Indian culture and

religion, which the older schools of Indologists were never tired of dining into our ears. The two commonest charges levelled were that the Indian world-view represented a 'nay' to all life and action and that morality had little, if any, place in Indian religion and philosophy. We believed that these views which had sprung into existence in the early days of Indology were by now dead. But as it appears the dust of the controversy has not yet settled. A few months ago Prof. Winternitz has, to some extent, shown the falsity of the latter view in an article contributed to this magazine. And recently, the former view has also been indicated to be utterly hollow by two German scholars themselves. Lueders and Glasenapp, as Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar points out in the *Calcutta Review*, May, 1936, have both opposed it. Summing up their contentions Prof. Sarkar writes :

"In reality, therefore, life-denying and life-affirming are appraised as having existed alongside of each other in India. And these two elements have been taken as constituting an 'organic unity' in Indian world-view and this is said to serve as such the metaphysical requirements as the practical life of the Indian people."

The Indian view-point has long been misunderstood both by Westerners and by a section of the Indians. It is partly without any basis, partly due to a fragmentary view and partly due to faulty interpretations of totally innocuous texts. It owes much to facile generalizations about irreconcilable differences between the East and the West. While it is true that a long

historical process has impressed each people with a speciality of its own, it is idle to make out an absolute difference as between race and race. It is only a question of distribution of emphasis. The Hindu view of life has within it a place for 'materialism'. But it has always set spirit above matter. Materialism has never been conceived to be the be-all and end-all of life. It has been the attempt from early times to mould and conduct the Hindu society in such a way as to lead up the entire people step by step to the final realization of the life's goal. A balance has always been sought to be struck between the different elements in society and the different goals of human endeavour. Often the equilibrium has been upset and too much emphasis has been put upon a certain view by the people as a whole. This has, however, been the outcome of the ill-digestion of texts. But whenever such maladjustments arose reformers appeared who helped restore the poise. It is also a curious puzzle which the West has never troubled itself to solve for over two thousand years. From early history India has been noted for her wisdom and philosophy. She has also been reputed for her prosperity and fabulous wealth. In fact she has been looked upon as an El Dorado, and there has always been a keen competition among nations to capture her trade. More often the covetous eyes of looters gloated over her riches. But how could a race of life-denying, world-forsaking, self-ruminating, passive thinkers could create the Ind of fable and fact? It seems that one who cannot worship gold above all becomes *ipso facto* a world-denier !

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**RAMAKRISHNA, THE MAN AND THE POWER.** By Swami Gnaneswarananda. *Published by the Vedanta Society, 120, East Delaware Place, Chicago. Ill. Pp. 125.*

This handy volume offers in a lucid and easy manner a short, yet far from scrappy, account of the life of Ramakrishna. It has also attempted to interpret his life and message in a way that would appeal to the men of the West. The book is divided into two sections, the first dealing with his life and the second narrating the genesis, expansion, and character of the mission which has carried his message round the globe. We can hardly name a better, abler and more reliable short introduction to the life of the Master than this little work.

**INSTRUCTION IN INDIAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS.** *Humphrey Milford. Oxford University Press. Bombay. Pp. 134.*

This is a collection of twelve essays by several distinguished teachers and educationists on the way how the different subjects of study should be taught in the Indian Primary Schools. The book is replete with a number of useful suggestions and deserves close attention from those who are eager about the primary education in India.

**ORIENTAL PHILOSOPHY—THE STORY OF THE TEACHERS OF THE EAST.** By F. R. Grant, Vice-President, Roerich Museum, New York....*"Dial Press", New York.*

Under this title to the History of the great Oriental philosophy there is added another impressive, beautifully edited volume. Miss F. R. Grant is an old friend of India and has personally visited the sacred and historic places of this cradle of humanity. The eminent author declares that "Asia—the cradle of Mankind—is, even more uniquely, the Cradle of all Philosophies". The entire enchantment of Asia is revealed in the romance that lies behind the spiritual quests of India, of China, of Nippon, of Iran. The pages of the book reveal the dramatic procession of such men of the ages as Gotama Buddha, Sri Ramakrishna, Confucius, Lao Tze, Zoroaster, and others of the same Heroic Hierarchy. In the spirit of the great Vedic formula—"Truth is one ; men call It

by different names"—the author has disclosed each of the great philosophies as another Facet in the superb Crystal of Oriental Thought.

In the same benevolent tone, in deep understanding the entire volume continues. Every reader of this book will remain a friend of the philosophies of the East. Although there are many shelves in libraries filled with books on oriental philosophy, yet this work shows how an unprejudiced mind can bring a new refreshing inspiring note.

Our readers will be especially interested in the following passage: "To India, the Vedanta system has given one of its greatest modern figures--Ramakrishna, regarded as a saintly incarnation. From his youth he seemed filled with the ecstasy of a god-love. The spirit of Bhakti--or rapture for the Divine--filled all his days and illumined his person--and at his feet sat the greatest men and women of all India, to learn that which he had gathered in his moments of Samadhi or union with the Divine. In the life of modern India, he takes his place as a witness that the spirit of god-intoxication still thrives in the soil of Aryavarta."

In every chapter of the volume one finds the same reverence and friendliness to the subject. All her definitions show that the author has not merely compiled material but has, with deep feeling and enthusiasm, profoundly studied the philosophies which appeal so much to her heart.

The volume is dedicated to Prof. and Mme. de Roerich and in her introductory note to the readers, the author says: "To Nicholas and Helena Roerich, who gave me so generously from their vast knowledge of Asia: one of the beloved words of Asia is Guru, teacher ; in the privilege of my association with Nicholas and Helena Roerich I have learned the beauty and deep implication of this word". In such an understanding of the concept of Guruship Miss Grant shows that she is truly Eastern in soul.

ANANDA

**SRI CHIDAMBARAM RAMALINGA SWAMIJI, HIS LIFE, MISSION, AND STUDIES.** By T. V. G. Chetty. *Central Co-operative Printing Works Ltd., Chinta-*



*dripet, Madras. Pp. 177. Price Rs. 2/-, foreign 3s. or 1 \$.*

This book is an illustration of the way in which the biography of a saint should never be written. It aims to acquaint the English-knowing public with a short sketch of the life, mission and studies of a remarkable saint of South India of the early nineteenth century, whose memory is still revered and annually celebrated by many. The author seems to be over-much concerned with miracles and occultism, which generally appeal to the ill-developed mind, but from which many are sure to turn away in disgust. This is not to say that miracles do not happen, but to point out that they do not constitute the saintliness of a person. Very few facts are given of his life. Even those that are given are disjointed. Of his early life we do not learn beyond that his birth was attended with a miracle, and that he was a precocious genius who evinced, while a mere stripling of 5 summers, a strong inclination for meditation. He also made himself famous quite early in age by his elucidation of difficult religious poems. Of his Sādhana we hear scarcely anything. On the threshold of youth he set out for Chidambaram where he stayed for a number of years. Later he removed to a village a short distance away from it, where he built a Temple for Satya Gnāna Sabhā, where annually a great festival is held in honour of the saint. A chapter is devoted to miracles, and his death is shrouded in impenetrable mystery. This is practically all that we know of his life. This, surely, leaves one disappointed, for one would like to know how he came to command the love and devotion of the villagers, to which the author refers, how he talked, loved and behaved, what his spiritual trials and practices were, how he came to exercise such an influence over those who came into contact with him, and similar other things. A story which is devoid of the human touch leaves us cold and unaffected. Mighty doings can either inspire our awe or ridicule, but they can never command our love and admiration which alone can exert a decisive influence on our lives.

It appears that this Yogi was a poet of no mean order. He has left among other works his great *Tiru-arulpa* which is a distinct acquisition to the Tamil literature. His sayings reveal a man of deep spirituality, wide culture, and liberal views. Born in an orthodox family he rose above petty distinctions. His disciples included the so-called

untouchables. He laid great stress on *Ahimsā* as a means to realization.

A description of the poetical work is given in the present book, and a few extracts from it have also been quoted. There are a number of illustrations and a map showing the places connected with the life of the saint.

**THE SHASTRAS ON UNTOUCHABILITY.** By V. G. Desai. *Published by Jivanji Dahyabhai Desai at Navajivan Karyalaya, Ahmedabad. Pp. 24. Price 1 anna and 3 pacs.*

This booklet is a résumé in English of the original work in Marathi by Mahāmahopādhyāya Shridharshāstri Pathak. The learned Shāstri who had been educated in the orthodox fashion was led in later life by his study of the Shāstras to conclude that untouchability is repugnant to them. The main arguments are here summarily put forth. Gandhiji says in foreward that "No anti-untouchability worker should be without the booklet, for it will enable him to combat all the orthodox argument in so far as it has any connection with Hindu scriptures."

### MARATHI

**SRI BHAGWAN RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSADEVA** (in two volumes). By late Mr. N. R. Paranjpe. *Published by Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Nagpur. Pages 347 & 394 respectively, Price Re. 1-12 per volume.*

At the very outset, the reviewer wishes to express his sincere opinion that late Mr. Paranjpe has done an inestimable service to the Marathi-knowing public in presenting it in two volumes with a most precious spiritual treasure in the form of the life of one who is 'a living embodiment of Godliness'. The value of the books is all the more enhanced as the author himself was an ardent devotee and came in contact with Srimat Swami Shivanandaji and Saradanandaji—the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. The other additional advantage which goes a great way to prove the authoritative nature of the volumes is that the author knew Bengali very well and the information he gathered was based on original books in Bengali, written by such eminent writers as Swami Saradanandji, Master Mahāsaya, Sri Ramchandra Dutt, Sureshchandra Dutt, and Saratchandra Chakravarti.

In these volumes the author has aptly

brought out the significance of the life of Sri Ramakrishna. When man observed the harmony that exists in the working of this universe, he tried to bring it on the human plane. The spirit of this harmony can be seen in the field of administration in such countries as the United States of America and the same spirit is reflected in the sublime doctrines of liberty, equality, fraternity, democracy, republicanism, and self-determination. The need of the day is that this sense of harmony which is applied to the other spheres of activity, should also be brought into reality in the domain of religion and it is in the life of Sri Ramakrishna that we find the fulfilment of this need. The quintessence of the Future Religion of the world lies enshrined in Him and time alone will unfold its truths in their utmost details. He has demonstrated both by example and precept how there is unity behind diversity and hence in him we find the "Guru" of all the main religions of the world.

The special merit of the volumes is that the author has written them, right from the beginning to the end, with a prayerful heart and reverential attitude, all the while believing that he was only an instrument in the hands of the Master. That is why a kind of holy aroma pervades the whole work. The expression is luminous and the style which is majestic creates an impression of faultless continuity. The unique feature of the volumes is that the chapters have some sayings of Sri Ramakrishna at their top and these very sayings are explained and exemplified in them, with the result that their significance is clearly brought home to the readers. This method is novel, because before reading the chapter, one becomes intensely curious to read the incidents and other related occurrences that amplify and illustrate those homely sayings. In those volumes we do not come across a mere statement of facts, but special chapters are devoted to throw light on such important and instructive topics as 'A Sādhaka and

Sādhana', 'Tantra Sādhana', 'Madhurbhāva' and 'Guru and Gurubhāva'.

The author has taken immense pains to make his work perfect from all points of view and it is not at all an exaggeration, if I say that he added a jewel to the biography section of the Marathi Literature. The volumes are monumental and there is no doubt that the Maharashtrians will derive immeasurable benefit from them.

The typography is excellent and the general get-up simple but attractive. The pages are interspersed with beautiful illustrations that lend an additional charm to the volumes.

**SRI RAMAKRISHNA VAKSUDHĀ.** Translated by Mr. A. M. Shembekar. Published by Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Nagpur. Pp. 119. Price 5 annas.

This small volume is the translation of the sayings of Sri Ramakrishna, compiled by Srīmat Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj—a most beloved disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. The translation is in simple Marathi and will be useful as a supplement to the life of Sri Ramakrishna, written by late Mr. Paranjpe. The independent reading is also very interesting as the book contains sayings, relating to the different spheres of life.

**SRI BHAGAVAN RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSADEVA.** By S. B. Thombre, M.A., Published by Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Nagpur. Pp. 30. Price 6 pice.

This is an abridged edition, mainly based on the life written by late Mr. Paranjpe. The book is meant for the Marathi-knowing masses and hence the language and style are very simple.

The peculiarity of the book is that within a short compass prominent phases of the Master's life are delineated with a deft hand and the price being very low, the masses at large will be able to avail themselves of it. Thus it will bring even an average man in touch with the ideals of the Great Avatāra.

SADASHIV B. NAGRE

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### SRI RAMAKRISHNA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

#### DARBHANGA

A special feature of the celebration of the birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna, that

was held at Darbhanga and Laheria Sarai, was the participation in it of a large number of Indian Christians and Moslems. The European Christian missionaries residing at Darbhanga and Laheria Sarai also attended the functions held in connection with the

celebration which began on the 5th of May and closed on the 10th. A conference of religions which was attended by people of all faiths and denominations, was held at both the places. Swami Megheswarananda who has been here in the course of his tour in this province, spoke at both the meetings on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. On the first day of the celebration, a big procession was organized at Darbhanga in which people of all classes participated. A life-size photo of Sri Ramakrishna was seated on the back of a caparisoned elephant which was led by the processionists parading all important streets and thoroughfares.

#### WARDHA

The literary society of the Wasudeo Arts College, celebrated the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary in May last. A meeting was held in the Town Hall with Rai Bahadur Chhotelal Varma, Deputy Commissioner, in the chair. Dr. Loudhe, Principal, gave a very nice and critical appreciation of the Prophet. Pandit Brijlal Sarraf spoke on the significance of Sri Ramakrishna's life. The president in his remarks specifically encouraged the idea of students to hold Jayantis and anniversaries of such great saints.

#### MIDNAPORE

Sri Ramakrishna Centenary was celebrated in May last for five days at the Garbeta Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama. Swami Apurvananda and Brahmachari Kanai of the Belur Math came here on special invitation to participate in the celebration.

On the first day of the celebration there were special puja, homa, readings from scriptures and devotional music. On the second day, a religious conference was held at which Swami Japananda, among others, spoke on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. On the third day, another largely attended meeting was held under the presidency of Swami Maheswarananda. On the fourth day, about 4,000 poor were sumptuously fed. On the fifth or concluding day, Swami Tapananda spoke on the Vedānta Dharma at a meeting held at the local H. E. School.

Thousands of booklets on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna were freely distributed among the people on all the days of the celebration.

#### BURDWAN

Sj. Hemendra Prosad Ghose, Editor of the "Dainik Basumati", who came here in con-

nection with the flood relief work, presided over the third monthly meeting of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Celebrations Committee which was held on May 24. Poems and articles on the Paramahansa Deva were read at the meeting by some members of the Centenary Committee and speakers including Sj. Narendra Nath Seth of Calcutta dwelt on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. The President in a neat little speech said that service to the poor was most dear to Ramakrishna Deva's heart and Burdwan people would honour the great prophet by serving the famine-stricken people of this district.

Sj. Kumar Nath Mukherjee, an old man who had the fortune of seeing Ramakrishna Deva, described the occasion of his meeting Ramakrishna Deva and of his seeing his charming personality.

#### KATI HAR

The people of Katihar celebrated the birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna on the 13th, 14th, and 15th of June last, in a manner quite befitting the occasion. The function began with the feeding of the poor on the first day.

A public meeting, which was held on the 14th at 6 P.M., with Mr. A. Mukherjee, I.C.S., District and Sessions Judge, Purnea, in the chair, formed the main feature of the second day's programme. Many distinguished citizens of Purnea, Dinajpur, Malda, Kishanganj and other places around Katihar were present in the meeting. After an opening song, the message of Swami Vivekananda on Sri Ramakrishna as well as that of the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission were read. The Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission, Katihar, read the report of the local Mission activities.

Swami Sambhuddhananda, Mahāmahopādhyāya Pandit Bidhu Sekhar Shastri, Moulavi Amiruddin B.L., Sjt. Krishna Chandra Karmakar, B.A., Swamis Grijananda and Manishananda addressed the meeting.

The President in his eloquent address remarked that Sri Ramakrishna was one of the greatest of world teachers of all times. This age of ours, he added, requires a religion of head and heart and Sri Ramakrishna being born with the head of Sankara and wide heart of Chaitanya preached a universal religion which could not but appeal to the whole of the humanity at large. He was indeed the spirit of the *Upanishads* embodied. With

a vote of thanks to the chair the meeting terminated.

On the 3rd day a meeting of the ladies of Katihar was held with Mrs. Lila Basu, B.A., in the chair. After an opening song a small paper on Sri Ramakrishna was read By Miss. Savitri Mazumdar. Prizes in connection with sports and essay competitions were awarded. Swami Sampurnananda delivered an eloquent address on the ideal of motherhood as illustrated by the great women of our race. Swami Sambuddhananda also gave a very interesting speech befitting the occasion. The ladies of the locality appreciated the lectures. The meeting was brought to a close with a vote of thanks to the chair.

#### ASSAM

A series of meetings and conferences were organized in May last under the auspices of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Celebration Committee in connection with the visit of Swami Suddhatmananda of Sylhet Ramakrishna Ashram, Swami Japananda and Swami Chandikananda at Nowgong, Assam.

Khan Bahadur Nuruddin, M.L.C. presided at one of these meetings and spoke on the essential unity of all religions. The Swamis, who spoke next, referred to the Centenary movement that has now spread all the world over and said that it was a movement for bringing about religions and cultural unity among all nations and races. Sri Ramakrishna was a prophet of synthesis and it was a happy idea that his birth centenary should be chosen as an occasion for making a serious attempt to establish world unity which was the dream of all prophets and sages.

At a ladies' meeting held at the Brahmo Mandir Hall, the Swamiji spoke on Sri Ramakrishna's conception of womanhood. By claiming equal status with men, they said, our women were claiming a position which was much inferior to that which was theirs by right. They were mothers, and it was ridiculous for mothers to claim equality with their own children.

#### MOTIHARI

The Centenary was celebrated with great solemnity and devotion under the Presidency of Rai Bahadur Thakur Ram Dhari Sinha when a big representative gathering of élites of the town, representing the main important religious views (Hindu, Moslem and Christian) joined in the function.

On the 12th June last a big procession

with bands, elephants, motor cars etc. started at 4 P.M. from the Middleton Park and after passing through the Main Road terminated at the said Park at 6 P.M.

At 7 P.M. on the same day a religious conference took place. Babu Ganesh Prasad Sahu, the Municipal Chairman and President of the District Hindu Sabha, read the message of the President of the Ramkrishna Mission and Babu Sukhdeo Prasad, Secretary District Hindu Sabha read the message of Swami Vivekananda. Swami Megheshwarananda of the Ramkrishna Mission delivered his inaugural speech.

The Rev. E. W. Oliver read a portion of the "Sermon on the Mount" and Rev. S. W. Law spoke on Christianity. Moulavi Abdul Majid, B.L. represented Islam. Babu Sukhdeo Prasad and Swami Megheshwarananda dwelt on Sanatan Dharma. The meeting terminated at 9-20 P.M.

On the 13th June speeches were made from 7 P.M. to 9-30 P.M. on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna by various speakers.

The President spoke a few words in appreciation of the different speakers and the patient hearing of the audience. The function terminated after the distribution of Prasad.

#### DIBRUGARH

Swami Japananda of the Belur Math who came here in connection with the work of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary, addressed in June last three public meetings here, of which one was of ladies.

The first meeting was organized at the local India Club at which Swamiji spoke on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. The second meeting which was of ladies, was held at the premises of the local M. E. School. It was a great success being attended by more than 400 ladies. Swamiji, who himself presided over that meeting, spoke on the "Ideal of womanhood". The speech was greatly appreciated by the audience. On the same day in the evening, Swamiji addressed another public meeting held at the Ramakrishna Seva Samiti hall, which was attended by about two thousand people.

#### MAIDA

The Sri Ramakrishna Centenary was inaugurated here on the 6th of June last with a week-long programme of celebration, with an opening speech by Mr. B. R. Sen, I.C.S., District Magistrate, who, referring to the

spread of the movement all the world over, wished it all success at Malda. Swami Ramananda of the Belur Math then sang a beautiful song which was greatly appreciated by the audience.

The second day's programme opened with a religious conference held under the Presidency of Mahāmahopādhyāya Pandit Bidhu Sekhar Sastri who opined that modern India owed a great deal for the moral and national uplift to Ramakrishna-Vivekananda. Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar also spoke on the same subject. Swami Sambuddhananda who followed, spoke on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. With Swami Bagalananda then announcing the next five day's programme, the function of the day came to a close.

### THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION FAMINE AND FLOOD RELIEF WORK

In connection with the famine relief work of the Mission in the districts of Khulna and Bankura, we beg to announce that our workers in the Khulna district have almost completed inspection and enrolment in Union 7 of Shyamnagar Thana. As a result, relief operations have also increased greatly. The Mission started work in 14 villages with a distribution of 28 mds. 88 srs. of rice among 508 recipients, and in the last weekly distribution the figures have gone up to 31 villages, 1,648 recipients and 83 mds. 26 srs. of rice. The area will be further extended, which will raise the total amount of rice distribution to 100 mds. In the Bankura district, where the work has recently been undertaken, the third weekly distribution of 6 mds. 5 srs. was made from Jayrambati amongst 188 recipients belonging to 7 villages. Here also the work will have to be extended.

To continue the work already undertaken, the Mission will require at least Rs. 500 weekly. Our funds at present are insuffi-

cient, and the continuation of the work depends entirely on the generous public. We therefore appeal again for liberal contributions, so that thousands may be saved from starvation and death. We cannot over-estimate the seriousness of the situation, and we believe our appeal will reach every philanthropic heart in the country and find a ready response for this great cause.

### ARAKAN FLOOD RELIEF

Our flood relief work in South Arakan is also going on smoothly. Here also the work has been extended. Besides distribution of 940 mds. of rice among 13,207 recipients for the week ending 4th July, from four centres, the Mission workers have also been giving temporary medical relief, and distributing building materials and clothing among the most deserving cases.

We beg to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the following noteworthy contributions for our famine relief fund:

	Rs.	A.
A friend, Poona	...	800 0
Raja Radharaman, Pilibhit	...	300 12
Screen Corporation, Ltd., Calcutta (Rupavani Charity Show)	...	253 4
Minoo Shapurji Todywalla, Esq., Bombay	...	121 0
Mr. Dayaram of Messrs. Dayaram & Co., Calcutta	...	100 0
P. C. Kar, Esq., Calcutta	...	100 0
Dr. Peter Boike, Calcutta	...	100 0

Contributions for this fund may kindly be sent to the following addresses:

- (1) The President, The Ramkrishna Mission, Belur Math, P.O. Howrah.
- (2) The Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 4, Wellington Lane, Calcutta.

SD. SWAMI MADHAVANANDA,  
Acting Secretary.  
16th July, 1936.

### A CORRECTION

*The pages of the Prabuddha Bharata for June and July, to our great regret, were wrongly numbered, the additional pages of the February issue, which was larger in size this year, not being taken into account. In the present issue we have put the number, after correcting the mistake.*

# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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No. 9



“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

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## THE DIVINE INCARNATION OR AVATĀRA

By SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Jesus Christ was God—the personal God become man. He has manifested himself many times in different forms and these alone are what you can worship. God in His absolute nature is not to be worshipped. Worshipping such God would be nonsense. We have to worship Jesus Christ, the human manifestation, as God. You cannot worship anything higher than the manifestation of God. The sooner you give up the worship of God separate from Christ, the better for you. Think of the Jehovah you manufacture and of the beautiful Christ. Any time you attempt to make a God beyond Christ, you murder the whole thing. God alone can worship God. It is not given to man, and any attempt to worship Him beyond His ordinary manifestations will be dangerous to mankind. Keep close to Christ if you want salvation; He is higher than any God that you can

imagine. If you think that Christ was a man, do not worship Him, but as soon as you can realize that He is God, worship Him. Those who say He was a man and then worship Him, commit blasphemy; there is no half-way house for you; you must take the whole strength of it. “He that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father,” and without seeing the Son, you *cannot* see the Father. It would be only tall talk and frothy philosophy and dreams and speculations; but if you want to have a hold on spiritual life cling close to God as manifest in Christ.

Philosophically speaking, there was no such human being living as Christ or Buddha; we saw God through them. In the Quran, Mohammed again and again repeats that Christ was never crucified, it was a semblance; no one could crucify Christ.

The lowest state of philosophical religion is Dualism; the highest form is the Triune state. Nature and the human soul are interpenetrated by God, and this we see as the Trinity of God, nature, and soul. At the same time you catch a glimpse that all these three are products of the One. Just as this body is the covering of the soul, so this soul is, as it were, the body of God. As I am the soul of nature so is God the soul of my soul. You are the centre through which you see all nature in which you are. This nature, soul, and God make one individual being, the universe. Therefore they are a unity, yet at the same time they are separate. Then there is another sort of Trinity which is much like the Christian Trinity.

God is absolute; we cannot see God in His absolute nature, we can only speak of that as "not this, not this". Yet we can get certain qualities as the nearest approach to God. First is existence, second is knowledge, third is bliss very much corresponding to your Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Father is the existence out of which everything comes; Son is that knowledge. It is in Christ that God will be manifest. God was everywhere, in all beings, before Christ, but in Christ we became conscious of Him. This is God. The third is bliss, the Holy Spirit. As soon as you get this knowledge you get bliss. As soon as you begin to have Christ within you, you have bliss, and that unifies the three.

## THE UPLIFT OF RURAL INDIA

By THE EDITOR

### I

The population of India has been growing in recent years at a very rapid rate without a corresponding rise in production and income. It has increased by nearly 100 million or 39 per cent. in the last fifty years between 1881 and 1931. Out of the total population, 89 per cent. live in villages, there being 696,831 villages against 2,575 towns in the whole of India. According to the Census of 1891, the population dependent on agriculture was 59.8 per cent. It rose to 71.3 per cent. in 1911 and to 73 per cent. in 1931. These figures go to show that three out of every four persons in India earn their livelihood from the land. If we compare notes with some of the progressive countries of the world, we find that during various years between 1921 and

1931, England and Wales had 7.1 per cent. of the total working population employed in agriculture, fishing etc; U.S.A., 22.0; Canada, 31.2; Germany, 30.5; France, 38.3; Japan, 50.3; and India, 67.2.

It is thus obvious that the Indian cultivator is the mainstay of the economic well-being of the country. The rural problems of India should therefore be solved as early as possible for strengthening and safeguarding the economic future of the country. It is more necessary at the present than ever, as the world conditions are undergoing great changes in economic structure and outlook. The Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture in India (1928) observes: "If the inertia of centuries is to be overcome, it is essential that all the resources at the disposal of the State should be brought to bear

on the problem of rural uplift. What is required is an organized and sustained effort by all those departments whose activities touch the lives and the surroundings of the rural population."

## II

The poverty of the rural population in India is colossal in its magnitude. The life of an average cultivator is as miserable and wretched as can be imagined. With the speedy growth of population from generation to generation the land has been divided into fragmented holdings. The average holding in agriculture is 4 acres, whereas an economic holding should be 6 if wet, and 40 if dry. In 1921, there were on an average 2.2 acres of cultivation per worker in Bengal and about 3 acres in the major provinces except Bombay, North-West Frontier Province, and the Punjab where the average was said to be  $10\frac{1}{2}$  acres. The excessive pressure on land is one of the most depressing conditions in the villages of India. It is more keen because there is not the diversity of occupations and because the teeming millions depend upon agricultural land as the chief means of support.

Some think of introducing scientific practices and modern methods to improve the agricultural condition of India. But the holdings are so small that scientific methods cannot be profitably applied to increase production and income. Besides this, scientific agriculture involves the use of costly implements and improved manure which the poor peasantry can hardly dream of purchasing. Abject poverty has not only been a bar to any progress in agriculture, but has brought forth a number of difficulties that have added to the complete ruin of rural India. Mr. K. Krishna Iyengar points out in his recent book on Indian Civics: "The root causes for this state of things have

been: (1) the decay of industries which have resulted in an abnormal pressure on land, (2) the disintegration of the village community by a modern government which has made the Patel and the Shanbhog or headman and accountant Government servants, introduced the ryotwari system of land tenure and a tortuous system of law and justice, and which collects its dues directly from each *pattadar* instead of from the village as a whole, and (3) the disappearance in most cases and the displacement of the old landed aristocracy".

Over and above poverty, there is the appalling extent of illiteracy prevailing among the peasantry, on account of which they cannot take any forward steps to better their condition by the improved methods of the day. Want of sanitation has rendered them victims of various epidemics and the general condition of their physique has enormously deteriorated. In addition to these, they are enmeshed in debt and at the same time have to pay taxes too heavy for them, which again are collected with mechanical regularity and inhuman severity. Then there are natural calamities such as drought, floods, and famines which visit numberless villages of every province in India and they have become almost annual occurrences.

## III

On account of over-population, the soil of India during the last hundred years has been used for the supply of grain. This has led to the continual decrease in the grazing land of the country, which has terribly told upon the life of the Indian cattle. The scanty supply of milk has consequently necessitated the withdrawal of milk from the diet of the poor villagers, the majority of whom are vegetarians either by choice or from necessity. The absence of milk from



diet has added to the already declining state of their health and it has increased the death rate in the Indian villages. This too is one of the reasons why the infantile mortality in India has superseded that of any other country in the world. The breeding of good milch kine has been suggested as a remedy thereof. But it is useless if there be not the supply of sufficient fodder for them. In a recent circular to the Governors of provinces, Lord Linlithgow, the present Viceroy, while commending the important problem of cattle-breeding as a means of improving the condition of the Indian peasantry observes that he is having it considered officially as he feels very strongly that there is no point in trying to improve the breed of cattle if the fodder is not there for their nourishment. The problem of meeting the fodder deficiency can be solved by reserving pasture lands in every village of India. In this connection, *The Indian Social Reformer* recently observes: "This can be done only by the State assuming responsibility for seeing that no animal useful to husbandry dies of starvation. When the stud bulls have done their duty, the cost of maintaining the cows during the months of gestation is beyond the means of the peasantry. Many young cows are sent to the slaughter-house because their owners cannot afford to maintain them when they are not yielding milk. Unless Government or other agencies come to the relief of the raiyat either with a subsidy or by taking over the care of the cows for the time being, it is to be feared that the animals will be killed for food before they bring pedigree calves into the world. One thing leads to another, and unless the problem is viewed and dealt with as a whole, the best intentioned efforts are liable to end in failure".

The encroachment on the grazing

lands of India has been made to an enormous extent by the railways and the reserve forests. If the superfluous railway lands could be restored, and the grazing rights in the reserve forests could be obtained, the cattle of India would have had a large supply of green fodder. Again, there are waste lands all over India which lie undiscovered. It is the duty of the State and the public to find them out and utilize them for feeding the cattle. Agricultural experts are wanted to teach the people of the villages how to preserve the green fodder by modern improved methods. So if the question of fodder supply be taken seriously along with arrangements for good breeding, the problem of milk will be greatly solved. Moreover, healthy cattle are required for the plough and draught. Sanitary dwellings and veterinary aid are very much wanting for the protection of cattle. Thus the problem of cattle protection is part and parcel of rural reconstruction in India. So far as the problem of cow protection is concerned, it is not a Hindu problem alone but a humanitarian issue to be seriously considered by all the communities of India. Considering the close relation of cattle to agricultural improvement and rural uplift, the State and the public should by all means support the running of model dairies, breeding farms, tanneries, and Pinjrapoles.

#### IV

The distribution of occupations in rural India is a problem which should receive great attention. In India the loss of occupations other than agriculture has made 73 per cent. of the total population live by agriculture alone. In industries, trade, transport, and administration people should engage themselves more and more for increasing production. Sir M. Visvesvaraya

observes in his *Planned Economy for India*: "Sufficient diversity of occupations is lacking; modern machinery and scientific methods have not been introduced into the country on any appreciable scale to help in increasing production. If there were a balanced structure of occupations, less than half the population now employed in it would be sufficient for agriculture. In the natural course, the rest of that population should be provided with work in industries and other occupations. It wants large-scale operations and the adoption of a multi-productional programme to do this. Appropriate changes should be effected to safeguard the country's future interests in this respect." The most unhappy thing is that peasants have lost their old occupations and industries. The manufacture of cloth used to support a good number of peasants in the villages of the olden times. But when the manufacture had been lost, the spinners and weavers lost their occupations. Cartmen and boatmen began to starve when railway, and steamships usurped the fruits of their labour. Craftsmen, dyers, and carpenters had to give up their professions to a great extent on account of modern competition. The old industries have to be revived and new industries need to be discovered for creating a diversity of occupations. The upper classes living in villages and towns should patronize the home industries to save the rural population of India.

## V

The manufacture, sale, and consumption of liquor, country spirits, hemp drugs, and opium have demoralized the peasantry of India and have robbed them of the last vestige of their strength and stamina. The drink and drug evil has filled the cup of their misery and driven them to rack and ruin. If the

State and the public do not undertake the task of checking the drink and drug evil among the ignorant masses of rural India, there is no other way of lifting them up from the terrible quagmire. It is well for the State and the people to recollect the famous words of Lord Chesterfield in a speech delivered by him in the House of Lords in 1743 against the Excise and Licence revenue derived from intoxicating drinks: "Luxury, my Lords, is to be taxed, but vice must be prohibited. Let the difficulties in executing the law be what they will. Will you lay a tax on the breach of the Commandments? Would not such a tax be wicked and scandalous, because it would imply an indulgence to all those who would pay the tax? This Bill (to license liquor shops for the sake of revenue) contains the conditions, on which the people are to be allowed henceforth to riot in debauchery, licensed by law and countenanced by magistrate. For, there is no doubt, but those in authority will be directed by their masters to assist in their design to encourage the consumption of that liquor, from which such large revenues are expected.

"When I consider, my Lords, the tendency of the Bill, I find it only for the propagation of disease, the suppression of Industry, and the destruction of mankind. I find it the most fatal engine that was ever pointed at a people—an engine, by which all those who are not killed will be disabled, and those who preserve their wits will be deprived of their senses."

Both the Hindu and the Muslim scriptures prohibit intemperance, and caste disciplines and public opinion are always against it. So prohibition is not difficult at all, if the State and the people want to introduce it for the welfare of the country. The United States of America was the first country in the modern

world to adopt prohibition as the national legislative policy. During the period of the prohibition law it considerably succeeded in preventing the making and using of intoxicants. American schools gave regular lessons on the evils of drinking and using narcotics. By means of educational organizations and anti-narcotic meetings the people of the country adopted plans for the eradication of the evils and the campaign was carried on from one end of the country to the other. Are such things impossible in India? We think it would be a far easier task in India, if the State and the public pay some attention to the problem. The evil of gambling and betting also can be combated in the same way in the villages of India.

## VI

The adult persons of a village should be taught elementary lessons on the three R's, home industries, hygiene, self-reliance, temperance, and thrift. Education is the only remedy for the backwardness of the rural population. In the Japanese villages about 60 per cent. of the local taxes is spent on educational institutions in the village itself. Arrangements for recreations like occasional festivals, Jātrās, Kathakatā, folk-dance, sports, and the physical activities of Ākhāda should be made and encouraged by the village improvement associations. These will create a healthy atmosphere in the villages of India and the peasantry will be saved from gambling, drinking, and other pernicious evils. By means of gradual propaganda

through pamphlets and preaching, such social customs and superstitions as prove disastrous to the health and character of the villagers should be fought against. Thus, the village associations can do much by way of training the rural population of India. In this connection, Sir M. Visvesvaraya's observations are noteworthy: "In the present circumstances of the village population, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to find the money and the teachers for all the training indicated. But the people of each village group should do all they can by self-help, that is, through the activities of its most prominent leaders, or through *panchayets* or *ad hoc* communities to provide these facilities. The first thing that a village should do is to form a society to promote education. One such society should extend its activities over a number of villages so that the services of a sufficient number of intelligent men may be secured to carry on efficiently the duties expected of it. If the societies are able to collect small sums of money and organize co-operative effort for promoting education, both theoretical and practical, Government and local bodies might be able to give small grants to supplement the funds locally collected."

It is doubtful if the villagers will be able to help themselves if the educated remain in towns and cities and be indifferent to the welfare of the rural population. The time is ripe when the educated should go in large numbers to their village brethren and begin the work of nation-building from there.

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# THE TWIN MESSAGES OF RAMAKRISHNA

BY REV. SAMUEL H. GOLDENSON, D.D.

It is customary to open one's remarks upon occasions such as this,\* by saying that one feels privileged to take part in this celebration. I shall begin in the usual way, for this is indeed a privilege. But I want to indicate immediately why, and in what sense you are so regarded. The degree in which one may entertain the sentiment of being privileged depends upon the nature, the importance, and the worthwhileness of the things that we celebrate. If I were invited to take part in a celebration, let me say, of the first pavement laid on Broadway, I might to some extent regard this as privileged, for pavements are great conveniences.

But from the standpoint of the deeper things of life, one cannot go quite into an ecstasy of raptures about pavement. I do not know whether the principal streets of Athens in the fourth and fifth centuries before this era were paved, but I do know that at that time, Pericles and Socrates and Plato and Aristotle spoke and wrote great things in Athens; things of the line of thought that has influenced the life of mankind until this very day. If I were, therefore, invited to take a part in the celebration of the founding of the Academy of Plato or the Lyceum of Aristotle I would indeed deem it a very great privilege.

Similarly, do I feel it a privilege to participate in recalling the life and teaching of a great Hindu Saint and Prophet, Ramakrishna. For, in human life, the spirit is nourished by philoso-

phy and religion more than by any other discipline, and this man, Ramakrishna, in his own life achieved the highest and noblest reaches of both of these departments of human thought and sentiment. It is not for me to go into detail in describing the contributions of this great man, for there are others here on this very platform more competent than I—men who are disciples of his, and who belong to the same great tradition.

But I wish to indicate what seems to me to be the two outstanding lessons that we, of this part of the world, may well draw from this great Master's teachings.

One is a negation, a very important negation; the other is an affirmation, equally important. The negation is in his protest, in the protest of this great Hindu Saint against the compelling and all-absorbing claims of the senses and the appetites. May I repeat this sentence; the negation is the protest, the honest protest against the absorbing and compelling claims of the senses and the appetites. Western civilization seems to be developed in one problem above every other, and that problem is how to satisfy the ever-increasing wants of society. All our thinking seems to be centered in matters which deal with the problems and processes concerned with the producing and distributing of the means of life. Some of these things we describe as necessities; others as conveniences; still others as luxuries.

The great Hindu seer brushed aside all these things by putting the claims of the soul above them all. That is

\* Sri Ramakrishna Birth Centenary celebration meeting held in the New York Town Hall, March, 1936.

his negation. This is not altogether new in the history of mankind, but the important thing is that a contemporary of ours was able to demonstrate in an extreme fashion that one can find joy, real joy and great satisfaction in life, without forever looking for the things that will give us bodily comforts, and bodily conveniences.

Of course, it takes a great soul to be able to achieve so much happiness, with so little worldly goods. The least that we can learn from him - I do not say the most, I say the least—the least that we can learn from him is that we do not need as much of worldly things in order to get some good out of life. I do not need so much of the worldly goods in order to give, or to get some good out of life. Unfortunately, there are many of us who cannot think of getting any good out of life until after we have got the most of things.

I say the least we can learn is that we can get some good out of life without so many things to own and to possess.

But the meaning of this lesson goes deeper than that. If we think of the misunderstandings and the antagonisms that prevail in our midst, we shall realize that most of them have to do with the very scramble for things.

At this very moment in our City there is a strike going on. And what, at bottom, does this mean? It means that there is a conflict of interests, that the dissatisfaction is with the division of wealth and of property as in the strife that underlies the opposing interests of capital and labour.

So in the antagonisms that prevail in the international world to secure the large material markets, and all of these manifestations of human restlessness, dissatisfaction and warfare are due to nothing more than the preoccupation

with material things, and material success.

The second great lesson that we may draw from Ramakrishna's teaching, is his affirmation of the spiritual unity that underlies the universe. This affirmation is related to the negation. Once we discipline our minds to transcend the divisions that have to do with material things, then we are in a position to see nothing but over-arching unity.

You see how the negation and the affirmation are related. We cannot have an affirmation of the universe so long as we live in the world of devising materialism.

There are many concepts of unity, many expressions and approximations of it. At bottom we have the unity that is merely immunity in character. It is oneness as opposed to manyness, singularity as opposed to plurality. Such a unity is purely formed as all numerical notions are formed.

Then there is a unity caused by what the scholastic writers used to describe as the principle of individualization; things are individual in their separateness because of the unique place that they occupy in space and in time, because a thing is where nothing else can be at the same time, and that thing is always subject to influences that play upon itself alone; hence it is bound to remain separate and individual.

Then there is a unity which is a unity of similarity produced by the same mould through which plastic things are made to pass. That also is a unity. When instead of a physical mould acting upon things we have a powerful human will forcing men to voice the same views, or adopting the same habits, then we have a kind of similarity which we describe as regimentation. This regimentative attitude in human conduct is what is meant by solidarity. A great many

people talk of solidarity. They want solidarity. But what is solidarity? It is nothing more than a mass attitude of obstruction or opposition to men, to causes, and to persons without regard to their merits or their rights.

These are false unities. Next we have a higher unity, but not the highest still, the artistic unity, the unity in which the creative poet, or painter, or sculptor, produces by representing the individuality of things, the individuality of tone, the individuality of colour, the individuality of form, and by bringing these individual things together in some happy and beautiful blend. That is the creative power of genuine art. Here is the unity artistic in character.

I imagine that the reason why Keats said that a thing of beauty is a joy forever is precisely because in such a manifestation the individual retains his individuality, and yet blends itself happily in the whole.

And, the supreme unity within which is incorporated the finer elements of all the others is the spiritual unity. This is the outstanding contribution of the great Hindu Prophet whose life and teachings we have come here to celebrate. This unity is universal and eternal. It is the unity in which the abiding essence of being or spirit permeates all things, and forms them with strands that link them with all things in the heaven above, and the earth, and the waters under the earth.

With Emerson we say, "There it is! There is no great and no small, and the thing that maketh all; where it cometh

all things are, and it cometh everywhere."

Isaiah sees this unity in its joyous expression when he describes it in the following language: "Although it is said, 'I dwell in the high holy place, and yet also with him that is lowly and contrite, to revive the spirits of the whole and to quicken the heart of the contrite.'" That is the exalted and the lowly brought into one single unity of love.

But where are the two principles that Ramakrishna can join in one utterance? A great negation on the one hand, a negation of the compelling claims of need, material things on the one hand, and the affirmation of unity, the unity of spirit on the other. I ask, where are the two principles expressed in one utterance? And the answer forms, "It is found in the Scriptures, where the Lord reminds us, that man does not live by bread alone, but by all that goes out of the mouth of the Lord." Here we have in one sentence the negation and the affirmation.

May I say further that these two great lessons, the negation and the affirmation have been the lessons taught not only by the Hindus and in our own Scriptures, but also by all the universal saints and seers, by the men who are able to achieve a universal outlook and an inner vision, and here especially before us the mission of Ramakrishna is that he was able to embody these ideals supremely, in our everyday life, and in a manner to give us a renewed confidence in the ultimate trials of the spirit.

## THE REALITY OF SPIRITUAL LIFE

BY DR. M. H. SYED, M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt.

How do we know the reality of spiritual life? By living the life that is needed for it, by direct personal experience and from the undeniable evidence of people who in the past as well as in the living present have actually experienced it. The direct experience which comes after long waiting, inner struggle and moral culture, has to be preceded by the testimony of seers gifted with divine vision. We have to watch their life closely and keep in intimate touch with them to realize the marked difference in their and in our lives; and it will not be long before we discover to our joy and satisfaction that their inward serenity is never ruffled, their balance of mind never disturbed, they are compassionate to a degree, utterly unselfish, ever ready to serve their fellowmen without any distinction whatsoever, they are neither repelled by the repellent nor are they attracted by the attractive, they generally sit loose on the object of senses, they are will-ruled, their passion-nature is calmed and they are deeply peaceful.

Such a life as theirs, is enough to inspire us with well-reasoned faith in the reality of life higher than our own. This faith is based not on mere hearsay, nor is it dogmatically imposed upon us by some timeworn tradition and awe-inspiring authority, but on the searching testimony of our critical, analytic and discriminative mind that has trained itself to weigh evidence and to test the value of a theoretical knowledge by its application to everyday life. Thus when we learn what is written in authentic books about the qualifications of a spiritually developed man, we test their

truth by dispassionately and fairly examining the life of such persons who are reputed to be spiritual or lay claim to any kind of higher life.

The writer had a fairly good opportunity of coming in contact with many Yogis, Sannyâsis and Muslim Sufis and Mystics. He writes with a certain amount of personal knowledge. In more than half the cases he noticed with no little mortification that some of them were sadly lacking in ordinary moral virtues which are admittedly believed, and rightly too, to be uncompromising conditions of any advance in spiritual life. Some of them had not subdued their desire-nature, nor, sufficiently controlled their mind: whereas others acted quite contrary to their professions. Side by side with such persons who were wanting in some moral qualifications or other, he had the inestimable privilege and great good fortune to come in close touch with a few of them who were distinctly head and shoulders above the common run of humanity; their moral acquisitions were of a secure and exalted kind, they were unmoved by joys and sorrows, gain or loss, honour and dishonour. In a word they completely fulfilled all the necessary conditions laid down for a spiritual life in the sacred scriptures of every religion. Their actions and professions never contradicted each other. They lived up to their highest ideal. It was on such occasions as these and from the lives of such regenerated men as they that the reality of a truly spiritual life dawned on the mind of the writer of these lines. Teachings in books like *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, *Upanishad* and *Light on*

*the Path*, which he thought at one time to be visionary and impracticable, utterly incapable of being translated into one's actions, were seen so very deeply assimilated and glaringly evident in their everyday life. Truly speaking, they are the experts of the science of life and they should be trusted as much (if not more) as one trusts an expert in the realm of physical science. In the beginning every student of science is not capable of testing the truth or falsity or the comparative value of any statement or theory. He has to depend entirely, for some time to come, on the reliable testimony of those savants who spend

their lifetime in patient investigation and research before they have direct knowledge.

Thus we should have faith and trust in such adepts and experts in the science of Self as we found by our own test to be worthy of our imitation and a safe guide to our higher life.

The success in this endeavour as in the domain of pure physical sciences, is as sure as ever. We need not only have faith, hope and courage but the will, perseverance, and what is appropriately called the sublime patience of an investigator.

## DIFFERENT TYPES AND STAGES OF EMANCIPATION IN SANKARA'S SCHOOL OF VEDĀNTA

By PROF. ASHOKANATH BHATTACHARYA, SHASTRI, VEDĀNTATĪRTHA, M.A., P.R.S.

The Advaita conceptions of Emancipation can be broadly classified under *two* heads,—regard being had to the question of ways and means :

(a) In the first place, the relative forms of emancipation which are attained by means of devotion to Personal Godhead.

(b) Secondly, the form of Emancipation achieved by trans-empirical knowledge.

The first kind is again capable of being subdivided into *three* different types of salvation, the variations arising from the nature of the object of worship :

(a) In the first place, there are worshippers of Hiranyagarbha, the Demiurge, occupying a lower status than the Supreme Creator Isvara. The powers of this Demiurge are rather of a delegated nature, and in

the hierarchy of created beings, he is regarded as the first-born and the most exalted person. Now, those who successfully follow the path of his worship, as prescribed in the Upanishads, are translated into the abode of Hiranyagarbha by a graduated course of journey through a hierarchy of blessed worlds as detailed in the *Upanishads*. Now, the question arises whether these blessed souls who reach the highest heaven are liable to a reversion to the cycle of transmigration. The answer to this question is not found on the surface. There is of course a definite statement of Bâdarâyana, based on the text of the *Upanishads*, that these blessed souls reach their final union with the Highest Absolute after the cessation of the particular cycle of creation along with Hiranyagarbha when his term of office



expires.<sup>1</sup> But Ānandagiri explicitly states that this holds good in the case of those spirits who worship the Highest Personal God, technically called the Causal Brahman (Kâraṇa Brahman), *in and through His* manifestation as the Hiranyagarbha, technically known as the Effected Absolute (Kârya Brahman).

(b) Those who worship only Hiranyagarbha without any reference to his Causal Background in Isvara are, however, liable to revert to the world-order after the cessation of the existing cycle of creation.<sup>2</sup> This state of blessed existence cannot be strictly speaking called 'salvation' in any sense. It is practically on a par with the periodic residence in lower heavens attained by the worshippers of the particular rulers of these regions. The reason for this difference of fate lies in the fact that Ultimate Salvation can be achieved only through the Supreme Knowledge of the identity of the self with the Absolute. Now, the worshipper of Isvara under the form of Hiranyagarbha has reached a state of spiritual progress which makes the dawn of the Saving Knowledge a matter of natural sequence,—while his less blessed companions revert to the world-order for their spiritual deficiency, and failure to realize the unity of Hiranyagarbha with Isvara.

(c) There is another category of blessed souls who worship the Highest Personal God directly and without reference to His lower forms of

manifestation. Now, these persons, according to Sankara, find union (though not oneness) with Isvara, and as a consequence equally share with Him in all His glories and blessedness, except the special prerogative of the world-business (i.e. creation and the like), which exclusively belongs to Isvara.<sup>3</sup> Now, though it is the highest station in an individual's life, consistent with the manifestation of his individuality, it is not the supreme form of Salvation, which is possible only in the merger of the individual into the Absolute Impersonal God. This Supreme Salvation is open only to those who have received the Highest Spiritual Light and realized their *unqualified unity* with the Absolute. But the worshippers of Personal God-head have got this privilege that they will reach beatitude in Final Release as a matter of course.<sup>4</sup> They have not to pass through the different heavens (which serve as different stations on the way to the world of Hiranyagarbha) like the worshippers of Hiranyagarbha, and they also are not limited within the jurisdiction of Hiranyagarbha, and are not in any way dependent upon the fate of Hiranyagarbha for their release. So the worshippers of Isvara reach a level of existence much higher and much more perfect than those of Hiranyagarbha. But still it is a lower state of perfection in comparison with the Final Release which means absolute identity with Unqualified Brahman in whom Mâyâ, the principle of limitation, has no existence.

<sup>1</sup> "Kâryâtaye tadadhyakshena sahâtaḥ param abhidhânât"—"On the passing away of the effected (world of Brahman) (the souls go) together with the ruler of that (world) to what is higher than that; on account of scriptural declaration."—*Br. Su. IV. 3. 10.*

<sup>2</sup> "Imam iti viśeṣanât anāvṛttir asmin kalpe. Kalpântare tvāvṛttir iti sūcyate"—*Ānandagiri, Ch. Up. Bh. Tikâ, IV. 15. 5. A. S. S., pp. 236-37.*

<sup>3</sup> "Jagadvyâpâravaram prakaranâd asannihitatvâc ca"—*Br. Su. IV. 4. 17.*

<sup>4</sup> "Samyagdarsanavidhvatatamasâm tu nityasiddhanirvânâparâyanânâm siddhivânâvṛttih. Tadâsrayenaiva hi sagunasaranânâm apy anāvṛttisiddhir iti"—*San. Bh. under the Sutra—"Anāvṛttisabdâd anāvṛttih sabdât"*—*Br. Su. IV. 4. 22.*

We have fully discussed the theory of Salvation propounded by Appaya Dikshita,<sup>5</sup> and we have found that according to him the highest form of Salvation is the attainment of unqualified identity with Personal Godhead. And the Supreme state of Salvation implied in the identity with Impersonal Absolute is not within the access of individuals so long as the world-order is not exhausted. This Final Release can be reached only with the Emancipation of the last individual self. We have already subjected this theory to a critical examination and found it to be riddled with inconsistencies. But the most damaging drawback of this theory is that it makes the attainment of the Highest Salvation a mere matter of chance over which neither Isvara nor, for that matter, the individual self identified with Him, has any control. The last soul is the luckiest of all; because, he reaches the Highest Salvation instantaneously, and he owes his good fortune to a mere accident.

This attainment of unqualified Isvarahood, Appaya Dikshita thinks, is accessible only to those who have received the highest spiritual illumination. About the Saguna worshippers of Isvara, he is in thorough agreement with Sankara that their salvation consists in the attainment of the glories and powers of God minus His Cosmic Activities.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> In the writer's paper entitled "*A critique of Appaya Dikshita's conception of Moksha*" (published in "*Indian Culture*," Vol. I. No. 2).

<sup>6</sup> "... tesam paramesvarena bhoga-sāmye'pi . . . sakalajagatsristisamhārā-

Thus it is evident that the aphorism :—

"And on account of the indications of equality of enjoyment only," refer to a lower form of relative salvation only and not to the Supreme Form of Emancipation; because, the individual soul, in the state of Ultimate Release, does not retain its character as a knowing subject. The knowledge of self (Ahambuddhi) disappears, since the limiting condition (i.e. the internal organ which is a product of the Avidyā belonging to each individual self) is also destroyed.

But according to Rāmānuja and other sectarian commentators, these Sūtras unmistakably point to the state of Final Emancipation; and they affirm that the individual soul, as a part of Brahman, retains its self-sense even in the released condition.

The basis of this fundamental difference lies in the acceptance and non-acceptance of the reality of the individual selves. The Advaitins regard the individual souls as unreal, as the limiting condition (i.e. Antahkarana—the internal organ) is false, being but a product of individual nescience. The followers of Rāmānuja, on the other hand, posit the Jivas as real—retaining their self-consciousness.

disvātantryalakshanam na niravagraham  
aisvaryam; muktânām tu nihsandhibandham  
Isvarabhāvam prāptânām tat sarvam iti  
mahato viseshasya sadbhāvāt"—S. I. S., pp.  
514-17.

<sup>7</sup> "Bhogamâtrasâmyalingâc ca"—Br. Su.  
IV. 4. 21.

## WHAT JAINISM STANDS FOR

By PROF. HIRALAL JAIN, M.A., LL.B.

According to the Jaina Purāṇas, there was a time when the whole society of men lived in peace and harmony, without any trouble and without any struggle, every one getting what he wanted and being satisfied with what he got. There was then no distinction of the ruler and the ruled, the master and the servant, and no idea of mine and thine. There was then no religion. But the happy state of things was disturbed when the idea of private property and ownership caught the fancy of man. The harmony of society was then broken and an era of struggle for life and existence, with its consequent warfare and trouble, commenced. It was at this stage that the great teachers of the age preached religion in order to avoid, or, at any rate, to control, as far as possible, the clashes of worldly interests by placing before men certain higher ideals. Thus, according to Jainism, religion originally came in, not for safeguarding the future life of men in heaven, but as a measure to keep peace on earth, promote goodwill amongst mankind and inspire hope of a higher life in the individual.

Various systems of religion have grown in the world at different times in different lands. If analysed closely and intelligently, they will all be found to contain the same truths and the same morals. Differences will be found to exist in details and for the reason that particular aspects of truth and morality are emphasized in one in a particular manner and not so emphasized in another. Jainism has attempted a *rapprochement* between these seemingly warring systems by a breadth of

vision which goes under the name of Syādvāda or Anekānta. The doctrine of Anekānta draws attention to the fact that there are innumerable qualities in things and beings that exist, and ever so many sides to every question that may arise. We can talk about or discuss only one of them at a time. The seeming differences in statements vanish when we understand the particular point of view. I say, "I am mortal". Another man says, "I am immortal". These are diagonally opposite statements between which there seems to be very little common ground. Can we accommodate both in one system? Jainism says, "Yes; please try to understand the view-point of each statement before declaring them to be irreconcilable. Is it not that the one who says he is mortal is emphasizing the phenomenon of birth and death of this body, about which there can be no dispute, while the other who says he is immortal is thinking of the imperishable nature of things in their essence. The form of things may change, but their substance, call it the soul or the primal matter, continues to subsist. Nothing that is can be annihilated." In the Jaina terminology, the one who calls himself mortal is true from the point of view of form or acquired qualities, while the other who calls himself immortal is true from the point of view of substance or inherent and essential qualities. Thus, what is irreconcilable opposition in the eyes of others is, to a Jaina, not only a mere difference of point of view but a necessary stage in understanding a thing in all its aspects. The two statements are supplementary of each other and go together to convey

the truth. It is because a part is mistaken for the whole that the difference arises. Jainas illustrate this by a significant story. Seven blind men went to get an idea of the elephant. Each of them could feel with his hands only one part of the huge animal, and when they sat down to compare notes, they began to quarrel. The one who had only felt the elephant's leg said that the animal was like a huge round pillar; the other who had felt the tail declared the animal to be merely like a stick, while the third who had felt the elephant's ear affirmed on oath that both of them were wrong, for, he was sure the elephant was like a winnowing basket. Thus they quarrelled without any hope of coming to terms, for each had the conviction of personal experience in the matter, till, at least, a man with eyes told them that they were all right and all wrong. They were right because each of them had stated a part of the truth and they were wrong because they wanted to pass a partial truth for the whole truth. Put all the partial truths together and you get the whole elephant. Every difference in religious and philosophical ideas—in fact, in all opinions and beliefs—may, in this light, be understood to furnish not a cause for quarrel but a welcome step towards the knowledge of the real truth. It is from this point of view of its synthetic outlook that the Jaina system has been claimed by its own logicians as a synthesis of all the so-called false beliefs.

We have seen above how a difference, or, to be more accurate, a seeming difference of opinion may arise between two persons when they are actually speaking about two different aspects of the truth. There would, similarly, be a great manifestation of difference when they both use the same word in different senses. One says, "God is the creator of the universe". Another says, "God

is not the creator of the universe". In spite of their utter difference the two statements can very well be reconciled if the idea of God in each case is analysed when it will probably be found that the one who believes God to be the creator means by God the ultimate power of Nature which is at the root of all that exists, while, the other means by it the absolved soul, the ideal of peace and supreme bliss which his opponent perhaps calls by some other name such as the *Muktâtma* or the like.

There can hardly be any thing of practical value in life which will hold good for all times and all places in exactly the same way. Yet these important factors of time and place are frequently neglected or forgotten in estimating the truth of different statements, and this furnishes yet another fertile source of misunderstanding. A time was, for example, in the history of the Aryan people when animal sacrifice on a large scale might have been necessitated by the circumstances, namely, extension of colonies, clearing of forests and making the land suitable for agriculture. Similarly, when one kind of profession began to attract too many people irrespective of their capacity for it, while other important and vital professions began to be neglected on account of the hardness of life involved therein, it became justifiable to bring into force the law of *Varnâsrama*, so that there might be men enough for all kinds of necessary work in society. It would however, not be just nor fair to maintain and emphasize these institutions of animal sacrifice and caste-restrictions when the time for them is passed.

We might feel inclined to blame Islam for its unsparing enmity to idol-worship and the institution of cow-sacrifice. But if we study the conditions prevailing in Arabia at the time when its great

Prophet Muhammad preached these ideas, they become quite intelligible to a reasonable mind. At that time the most barbarous brutalities were in vogue for idol-worship, and even human sacrifice was prevalent. If to suppress this barbarism Muhammad preached against idol-worship, and if, not being able to make people give up animal sacrifice altogether he substituted the cow for man, we have to thank him rather than censure him. It must be remembered in this connection that the cow was not as useful to the Arabs as it is to the Indians; it was the camel that was more useful to them. Similarly, the marriage laws and the law of divorce that the Prophet promulgated, howsoever unfair they may appear to us today were, no doubt, a great improvement upon the conditions that prevailed there before him. But what was right in Arabia at a remote age cannot be claimed to be equally right today and in India. We must take into consideration the difference in time and place.

This is the doctrine of Syâdvâda or Anekânta or view-points which forms the basis and the *sine qua non* of the Jaina system of thought. It requires that all facts and assertions should be studied in relation to the particular point of view involved and with reference to the particular time and place. If these differences are clearly understood, the differences in principles will vanish and with them the bitterness also. Obviously, this is the best means of promoting common understanding and goodwill amongst the followers of different faiths. One might say that this is mere common sense and that the principle is presupposed in every system of thought. It must, however, be remembered that the principle if kept in the background is always forgotten when needed most, and that common sense, unfortunately, is a thing which

is most uncommon. In the Jaina system the principle is always kept in the forefront, and hence, religious toleration and fellowship is the essence of Jaina philosophy.

I shall now deal with another principle of Jainism which is also of very great importance and of universal application, but which has frequently been misunderstood and misrepresented. This is the principle of Ahimsâ or non-injury to living beings. Primarily, the preaching of Ahimsâ was directed against the institution of animal sacrifices in which hundreds and thousands nay, millions of dumb and harmless creatures were butchered in the name of religion. This necessarily set the Jaina saints a thinking and they asked the question, "Is this shedding of blood really necessary for the betterment of the soul?" They received an answer from their inner conscience that the shedding of blood was not only not necessary, but it was against all canons of settled and peaceful religious life and holy conduct. But when the mind is blinded by fanaticism, reason which alone can guide us as to the requirements of time and place becomes obscured and superstition and custom take its place. So the Jaina saints decided to reawaken people as to their duty towards themselves and towards all other beings. They emphasized Ahimsâ as the rule of good conduct. Briefly stated, it comes to mean this. Life is sacred in whatsoever form it may exist. Therefore, injure no life, and let this be the highest ethical principle. Be a gentleman: a gentleman is one who has no tendency to do violence. Every religion worth counting recognizes the sanctity of human life: Jainism wants the same feeling to be extended to other forms of life as well, namely beasts, birds, and smaller creatures. But one might say that life in the world is well-nigh impossible with absolute abstention

from injury to all forms of life. So Jainism distinguishes various kinds of injury according to the mental attitude of the person committing it; for, it is the intention that causes sin. It is conceded that a good deal of injury to life is involved even in the daily duties of an ordinary man, such as walking, cooking, washing and the like pursuits. The various operations of agriculture and industry also cause destruction of life. Life, again, may have to be injured and even destroyed in the act of defending one's own life and property. So with the catholicity which characterizes all its rules, Jainism does not prohibit a householder from committing these three kinds of *Himsâ* which may be called accidental, occupational, and protective; rather, shirking from them would be considered a dereliction of duty. It is only the injury for injury's sake, for the merest pleasure or the fun of it without any thought and without any obvious higher end to serve, that a householder is recommended to guard himself against. Whenever the occasion arises, let him ask himself the question, "Is it necessary for me to injure this being, and if so, what is the minimum amount of injury that will serve the needs?" This much care and caution would save him from a lot of wanton destruction.

It is not the infliction of physical injury alone that constitutes *Himsâ*, but violence in words and violence in thought is also *Himsâ*, and one must abstain from these too. Would these be called by reasonable men principles calculated to weaken communities and nations? In this age of armament and rearmament, one feels inclined to say 'Yes' to this question. But if religion has to fulfil its mission of bringing peace on earth and goodwill amongst mankind, it must always emphasize the ultimate good, and declare evil as evil

howsoever unavoidable it may appear at any particular time. Consistently with this view Jainism wants abstention from injury to life to be established as a rule of good conduct; it wants to make people gentlemen who have no tendency to do violence to anybody. With its outlook of *Anekânta*, Jainism recognizes that it is not always easy or good to abstain from inflicting injury; in such cases it recommends us to go by the rule of minimum of injury.

The other Jaina ethical vows are truthfulness, abstention from stealing, and sex-fidelity which need no comments here. They, together with the vow of *Ahimsâ*, it might be said in passing, constitute such a nice and simple code of good conduct that a reasonable observance of it would leave no scope for the application of any of the sections of the Criminal Procedure Code. The fifth and last vow requires some explanation here. It is called '*Parigraha Parimâna Vrata*' or the vow of setting a limit to the maximum wealth that one would possess. As said above more than once, the aim of Jainism is to avoid as far as possible, undesirable clashes in life and consequent disharmony in society. Under the present vow, a householder is recommended to fix beforehand the limit of his worldly belongings which he would never try to exceed. If and when he has reached that limit, he will either try to earn no more, or, if the earnings come in spite of himself, he would devote the surplus to charitable purposes the recognized forms of which are medical help, spread of education, distribution of food and other measures of relief from suffering. The spirit of the vow is clear. One should not be too greedy or selfish. The common wealth is limited, and so, in fairness to others, one should take to himself only as much as, according to his own reasonable estimate, he needs.

This is good for the individual satisfaction as well as for the society. One cannot fail to recognize in this vow a very quiet and peaceful attempt at economic equalization by discouraging undue accumulation of capital in individual hands. It is, however, no fault of the religion itself if such noble principles have frequently been recognized in their violation rather than in their observance. At the same time, it cannot be denied that the vow has created in the Jaina community a very charitable disposition as a result of which large amounts of money are devoted every year to deeds of philanthropy and so many charitable institutions are being permanently financed by the community.

Yet another principle of Jainism might be mentioned here. Jainism does not preach that there is any special power ruling over the destinies of men from behind or above. On the contrary, it teaches that every individual works out his own destiny by his own mental and physical exertions which, by themselves, generate energies that bring to him agreeable or disagreeable experiences. This is the Karma theory of Jainism which has been worked out in great detail. According to it, nothing, as a rule, will come without effort, and no action will go without its appropriate result. It makes each individual fully responsible for his progress or decay—a sort of complete individual autonomy. The Jainas wor-

ship, not the creator or the destroyer of the universe but those great saints whom they believe to have known the ultimate truth and to have preached it to humanity. These saints they call Tirthankaras, i.e. those who made it easy for others to cross over the ocean of life.

It will be seen that in a religious system like this there is no place for a distinction of caste and creed, and for a struggle for form and ceremony, and if within the Jaina community these weaknesses exist, they are in spite of specific religious injunctions against them and as a result of the close association of the Jainas with communities where these play an important part. In its philosophy as well as ethics Jainism has close affinities with Hinduism and Buddhism, and, in fact, with every other religion such as Christianity and Islam which have all the same end in view, namely, the salvation of mankind. It, however, stands to the credit of Jainism that it actively seeks a synthesis with all other systems through its outlook of Anekānta, and logically proves that it is one truth which is revealed to us through its several aspects. It also wants non-violence in thought, word and deed to be established as a rule of good conduct. Thus, it makes a definite move towards a common understanding amongst all faiths that have been and that may be, and a feeling of brotherhood among all men.

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# MY MEMORIES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

BY MARTHA BROWN FINCKE

Early in November, 1935, I landed in Calcutta and set foot for the first time on the soil of India. As I left my home in the United States of America journeying westward to encircle the globe, I thought of myself as a tourist in the different countries through which I passed. Only when I reached India did I in thought become a pilgrim. As a pilgrim I went the day after landing to the Belur Math on the farther side of the Ganges to bow my head in reverence before the tomb of the great Swami Vivekananda. In the upper room of the guest-house I met Miss Josephine MacLeod, his devoted friend. I also met several of the resident Swamis. When to each of them I said that I had once known Swami Vivekananda, their eagerness to hear of that far-off meeting surprised me. It was indeed to me one of the most vital influences of my life, but could it mean anything to others? Since they assured me that it was so, I am setting down my recollections of those two days, now 42 years ago, when I came under the influence of that great man.

In September, 1893, at the World's Fair, held in Chicago to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus, a Parliament of Religions was a part of the programme. To this journeyed the then unknown young Hindu monk, Swami Vivekananda. His power over the audiences who heard him set forth his universal Gospel, and the magic of his personality, are common knowledge.

At the close of the Parliament, in order to be independent of the personal benefactions of his admirers, the Swami

engaged with a Lecture Bureau to tour the States beginning with the East, and early in November he came to the town of Northampton, Massachusetts. This charming old town, half-way between New York and Boston, and since prominent as the home of Calvin Coolidge, is situated on low hills in the Connecticut Valley just before the river plunges into the gap between Mt. Tom and Mt. Holyoke. In flood seasons the low-lying meadows about the town shine with the covering waters and the purple outline of the Mt. Holyoke range forms the horizon to the south. Stately elm-trees border the streets and the place had then a slumberous aspect except when an eruption of students woke it to animation. For a women's College formed the centre of its intellectual life, Smith College, founded in 1875 by Sophia Smith for the higher education of women.

To this College I went as a Freshman in the fall of 1893, an immature girl of eighteen, undisciplined but reaching out eagerly for the things of the mind and spirit. Brought up in a sheltered atmosphere, in the strictest Protestant Christian orthodoxy, it was with some misgivings that my parents saw me leave the home and be exposed to the dangers of so-called "free-thinking". Had not one of my friends gone the year before to Vassar College and was rumored to have "lost her faith"?

The College dormitories were not large enough to house all of the incoming class, so I with three other Freshmen boarded in a square brown house near the campus. This was kept by a lady whose independent spirit and



humorous outlook endeared her to us, despite her despotic rule. College lectures for the whole body of students with compulsory attendance, were of frequent occurrence, and many well-known leaders of thought visited us.

On the Bulletin for November was the name of Swami Vivekananda who was to give two evening lectures. That he was a Hindu monk we knew, nothing more, for the fame he had won in the recent Parliament of Religions had not reached our ears. Then an exciting piece of news leaked out; he was to live at our house, to eat with us and we could ask him questions about India. Our hostess' breadth of tolerance may be seen in receiving into her house a man with dark skin, whom the Hotel had doubtless refused to admit. As late as 1912 the great poet Tagore with his companion wandered through the streets of New York looking in vain for shelter.

The name of India was familiar to me from my earliest childhood. Had not my mother almost decided to marry a young man who went as a missionary to India, and did not a box from our Church Missionary Association go each year to the Zenanas? India was a hot land where snakes abounded and "the heathen in his blindness bows down to wood and stone". It is astonishing how little an eager reader like myself knew about the history or literature of that great country. The life of William Carey I had read, had heard of St. Francis Xavier at Goa, but it was all from the missionary standpoint. You must remember "Kim" had not yet appeared. To talk with a real Indian would be a chance indeed!

The day came, the little guest-room was ready and a stately presence entered our home. The Swami's dress was a black Prince Albert coat, dark trousers,

and yellow turban wound in intricate folds about a finely shaped head. But the face with its inscrutable expression, the eyes so full of flashing light, and the whole emanation of power, are beyond description. We were awed and silent. Our hostess, however, was not one to be awed, and she led an animated conversation. I sat next to the Swami and with my superfluity of reverence found not a word to say.

Of the lecture that evening I can recall nothing. The imposing figure on the platform in red robe, orange cord, and yellow turban, I do remember, and the wonderful mastery of the English language with its rich sonorous tones, but the ideas did not take root in my mind or else the many years since then have obliterated them. But what I do remember was the symposium that followed.

To our house came the College President, the Head of the Philosophy Department and several other Professors, the ministers of the Northampton churches and a well-known author. In a corner of the living-room we girls sat as quiet as mice and listened eagerly to the discussion which followed. To give a detailed account of this conversation is beyond me though I have a strong impression that it dealt mainly with Christianity and why it is the only true religion. Not that the subject was the Swami's choosing. As his imposing presence faced the row of black-coated and somewhat austere gentlemen, one felt that he was being challenged. Surely these leaders of thought in our world had an unfair advantage. They knew their Bibles thoroughly and the European systems of philosophy, as well as the poets and commentators. How could one expect a Hindu from far-off India to hold his own with these, master though he might be of his own learning? The reaction to the surprising result that

followed is my purely subjective one, but I cannot exaggerate its intensity

To texts from the Bible, the Swami replied by other and more apposite ones from the same book. In upholding his side of the argument he quoted English philosophers and writers on religious subjects. Even the poets he seemed to know thoroughly, quoting Wordsworth and Thomas Grey (not from the well-known *Elegy*). Why were my sympathies not with those of my own world? Why did I exult in the air of freedom that blew through the room as the Swami broadened the scope of Religion till it embraced all mankind? Was it that his words found an echo in my own longings, or was it merely the magic of his personality? I cannot tell, I only know that I felt triumphant with him.

In speaking with a Swami . . . at the Belur Math, he said that to him Swami Vivekananda personified Love. To me that night he personified Power. I think that I can explain this from my later knowledge. No doubt these great men of our College world were narrow-minded, of closed convictions, "wise in their own conceits". How could they accept the saying "Whosoever comes to Me through whatsoever form, I reach him?" At Chicago the Swami had recently felt the rancour of Christian missionaries and undoubtedly his accents took on an austerity as he felt the same spirit in these representatives of Western learning. To them Love would not appeal, but Power can awe even when it does not force agreement. The discussion, beginning with the utmost courtesy, became less cordial, then bitterness crept in, a resentment on the part of the champions of Christianity as they felt that it was "thumbs down" for them. And truly it was. The repercussion of the triumph that filled me then is with me to this day.

Early the next morning loud splashings came from the bathroom, and mingling with them a deep voice chanting in an unknown tongue. I believe that a group of us huddled near the door to listen. At breakfast we asked him the meaning of the chant. He replied, "I first put the water on my forehead, then on my breast and each time I chant a prayer for blessings on all creatures". This struck me forcibly. I was used to a morning prayer, but it was for myself first that I prayed, then for my family. It had never occurred to me to include all mankind in my family and to put them before myself.

After breakfast the Swami suggested a walk and we four students, two on each side, escorted the majestic figure proudly through the streets. As we went we shyly tried to open conversation. He was instantly responsive and smiled showing his beautiful teeth. I only remember one thing he said. Speaking of Christian doctrines, he remarked how abhorrent to him was the constant use of the term "the blood of Christ". That made me think. I had always hated the hymn "There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins" but what daring to criticize an accepted doctrine of the Church! My "free-thinking" certainly dates from the awakening given me by that freedom-loving soul. I led the conversation to the *Vedas*, those holy books of India he had mentioned in his lecture. He advised me to read them for myself, preferably in the original. I then and there made a resolve to learn Sanskrit, a purpose which I regret to say I have never fulfilled. Indeed as far as outward result goes, I am a case of the good seed choked by thorns.

One rather humorous outcome of this advice about the *Vedas* should not be omitted. The following summer a pretty little Guernsey calf was added

to the family live-stock, and when my father gave it to me, I named it "Veda". Unfortunately the little one only lived a few months and my father said its name had killed it.

Of the succeeding lecture I can say nothing. The great Swami left us and I never saw him again. I even lost sight of his journeyings through our country and did not know that he made another visit to it two years later. And yet those two days of his mighty presence have certainly coloured all the rest of my life. I wrote to my family a detailed account of this visit, expressing myself so strongly that my devoted but over-solicitous father became alarmed. He pictured me leaving the faith of my fathers and becoming a disciple of the Swami. He used argument and ridicule, and to spare him further anxiety—for I adored my father—I stopped talking of my new thoughts, and kept them to myself.

I often think of the time I have lost, of the roundabout way I have come, groping my way, when under such guidance I might have aimed directly for the goal. But for an immortal soul it is wiser not to spend time in regrets,

since to be on the way is the important thing.

One reads of the seeds found in Egyptian sarcophagi, buried thousands of years previously and yet retaining enough vitality to sprout when planted. Lying apparently lifeless in my mind and heart, the far-off memory of that great apostle from India has during the past year begun to send forth shoots. It has at last brought me to this country. During the intervening years—years of sorrow and responsibility and struggle mingled with joy—my inmost self has been trying out this end that doctrine to see if it was what I wanted to live by. Always some dissatisfaction resulted. Dogmas and rituals, made so important by orthodox believers, seemed to me so unimportant, so curbing that freedom of the spirit that I longed for.

I find in the universal Gospel that Swamiji preached the satisfaction of my longing. To believe that the Divine is within us, that we are from the very first a part of God, and that this is true of every man, what more can one ask? In receiving this as I have on the soil of India, I feel that I have come Home.

## MATTERS ECONOMIC

By SHIB CHANDRA DUTT, M.A., B.L.

### OUR UNIVERSITIES AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Our Universities have a definite part to play in the economic development of the country and the programmes and policies of our universities should be closely co-related to the industrial and commercial activities in the country. This point was stressed in a speech of Prof. S. N. Bose at the Senate House in connection with the Education Week in Calcutta in

February last. An extract from his speech is given below :—

"Science cannot be made to face social problems adequately unless and until universities are linked up with industrial and commercial activities in the country, and co-ordinated with such concerns as make practical use of scientific investigations.

"What we have to bear in mind is that the question of scientific training and that of industrial and technical

activities in the country do not fall apart. What is therefore of supreme importance is that we should provide for as direct an interchange of services as possible between our educational institutions and technical and industrial centres."

#### INDIA'S PRE-EMINENT NEED - INDUSTRIALIZATION

Presiding over the annual general meeting of the Mill-owners' Association at Bombay on March 23 last Sir Joseph Kay in the course of his speech is reported to have spoken as follows:—

"Industrialization is profoundly important to this country and must not be judged by the embarrassments which it may occasion to Western interests and Western industries. It *provides more work for the people and relieves pressure on the land* and must lead to what is so necessary in India, *a better and higher standard of living for agriculturists.*" (Italics are ours.)

#### THE TEA INDUSTRY

832,935 acres in India are under tea. The yield in India in 1934 was 383 million pounds. The amount invested in the industry is £75 million. It gives employment to about one million persons.

Out of 1,046 gardens in Assam in 1934, 336 were owned by Indians. Indians also hold considerable shares in European and Indian managed rupec companies.

In the United Kingdom the consumption of tea is ten times that of coffee; whereas, in the U.S.A. and the continent the consumption of coffee far exceeds that of tea.

Great Britain is the largest market for tea in the world. Up to the beginning of the Crimean War Chinese tea only used to be consumed in Britain. Consumption in that country reached

its record amount of 462 million lbs. in 1931, of which 248 million lbs. came from India, 119 million lbs. from Ceylon, 68 million lbs. from Java and Sumatra and 6 million lbs. only from China. In 1934 of the tea consumed in Britain 90½ per cent. was imported from within the Empire and 9½ per cent. from the outside.

Considering the acreage under tea, China occupies the first place in the world. Most of her tea, however, is consumed within the country.

Before the war Russia used to import annually about 177 million lbs. At present Russia does not annually import more than 50 to 60 million lbs. Tea has been planted in 85,000 acres in Georgia. That area is expected to produce 40 to 50 million lbs. of tea per annum and would thus make Russia almost self-contained as regards her requirements of tea.

#### BRITISHERS AND THEIR FOOD

The British nation spends on:—

	£	millions	a	year
Meat	...	294	"	"
Fruit	...	119	"	"
Milk	...	106	"	"
Bread	...	51	"	"
Butter	...	54	"	"
Sugar	...	49	"	"
Vegetables	...	40	"	"

The total amount spent on food is about £1,075 millions a year. This comes to nine shillings per head and is less than one-third the total national income.

A diet adequate according to modern standards is beyond the reach of 50 per cent. of the population.

To make the diet of the poorer groups adequate for health and physique the consumption of milk, eggs, butter, fruits, vegetables, and meat has got to be raised by 12 to 25 per cent.

These particulars are to be found in "Food, Health and Income" published by Messrs. Macmillan & Co. prepared on the basis of data collected by the Rowett Research Institute and the agricultural Marketing Boards.

#### THE FEDERATION OF INDIAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

At a meeting held in New Delhi on April 5, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce is reported to have passed, among others, resolutions recommending (1) that there should be a statutory majority of Indians on the boards of Port Trust in India, (2) that Government should collect complete statistics and data in regard to capital, production, growth, and methods of competition of non-Indian industrial enterprises and concerns operating in India, (3) that 2 as. per cwt. of the Rs. 1-5 per cwt. of the excise duty imposed on Sugar manufactured with the vacuum pan process should be set apart for raising the standard of cultivation of cotton both as regards quantity and quality, (4) that steps should be taken to ensure the employment of *Dufferin* cadets by shipping companies plying the coastal trade of India as well as by those receiving mail subsidies and patronage from the Government, and (5) that adequate duties should immediately be imposed on coal and oil fuel and a Committee of Inquiry should be appointed for examining the present position of the coal industry with a view to suggesting remedies for its rehabilitation.

#### ENGLAND AND THE EMPIRE

Is England doing all she can for the development of the Empire? The reply to this query, as given by Lord Bledisloe, a former Governor-General of New Zealand, would appear from the following extract from his speech he is report-

ed to have delivered at a dinner of the Cheltenham Chamber of Commerce. (*Statesman*, 31-3-36):—

"No one who had spent five years as he had, on the other side of the world in intimate association with a highly educated people with strong Imperial instincts and in close and continuous contact with Empire trade problems could fail to be struck, on the one hand with Britain's wisdom in the realm of international finance and her amazing stability and recuperative power in a mad world of short-sighted economic nationalism, and, on the other, with *the non-utilization of her vast Imperial resources and the unenterprising stay-at-home attitude of her population and her capital, although endowed with a territorial heritage and undeveloped natural resources to which the history of the world presented no parallel.*

"Lord Bledisloe said he could not help contemplating *the millions of monetary capital lying idle in the banks, the millions of fertile acres idle in the Empire and the millions of people remaining idle and impoverished in this crowded country without wondering whether they could not by efficient organization be profitably united in triune partnership to the advantage of Empire welfare.*" (*Italics are ours.*)

#### CALCUTTA CORPORATION GRANTS

The Calcutta Corporation has budgeted for a total grant of about Rs. 5,10,000 in the current year for educational institutions, libraries, charitable organizations etc. The amount has been distributed as follows:—

Primary Schools and Primary Departments of Post-Primary Schools—Rs. 92,669;

Tols and Madrasahs—Rs. 15,474;

Night Schools—Rs. 9,294;

Primary Departments of Secondary Schools—Rs. 74,698;

**Industrial and Technical Schools—**

Rs. 1,17,000;

**Libraries—Rs. 47,500;****Alms Houses and Charitable Institutions—Rs. 1,26,600;****Zoological Gardens—Rs. 26,000.****THE LEIPZIG FAIR**

The Leipzig Fair is the greatest of its kind in the modern world.

It dates from the year 1156.

Till about the middle of the nineteenth century that was a merchandise market, where goods used to be actually brought for sale. Because of the revolution in the methods of production and transport it developed into a Samples Fair, where merchants bring a choice of samples, the goods being supplied later direct from the factory to the shop.

“Leipzig lies in the centre of the great industrial region which produces first the goods which can best be sold at a Samples Fair. Not all machine-made goods can be sold by travellers. All those articles which are bulky, heavy or fragile are best and cheapest bought and sold at a Samples Fair. No picture, no description can tell a buyer the exact nature, range and method of working of many articles. But he can see all those things if he visits a fair, for he has an unequalled opportunity of seeing at one and the same time the products of competing firms. Toys, musical instruments; haberdashery and fancy goods, glass, porcelain and pottery; metalware, domestic and kitchen equipment. A glance at the map shows that all these are produced in Central Germany. For nearly a thousand years they have looked to Leipzig as their market place; and when the change had to come, economic and, geographical conditions combined to make the old merchant city of Leipzig the site of the modern Samples Fair.”

The number of exhibitors rose from about 1,300 in 1897 to 4,253 in 1914, and 8,325 in 1919. In the later years the number remained near about 10,000.

The total number of buyers rose from 20,000 in 1914 to 125,000 in 1932. The number of foreign buyers in the Spring of 1930 was 32,420. They included not only visitors from the European countries and America, but also from India, China, Japan, and Australia.

The Fair stands as a monument to Germany's genius in trade and industry. Germans take a justifiable national pride in it.

The fair was held last in the Spring of this year. It will again be held in the Autumn.

**FALL IN THE IMPORT OF MATCHES**

The “Arthik Unnati”\* for Chaitra, 1342 B. S. draws our attention to the fall in the import of matches into India. The extent of the fall would be evident from the following figures:—

		Rs.
1923-24	...	1,45,92,000
1924-25	...	88,89,000
1925-26	...	93,45,000
1926-27	...	65,60,000
1927-28	...	39,37,000
1928-29	...	17,29,000
1929-30	...	10,81,000
1930-31	...	4,11,000
1931-32	...	1,05,000
1932-33	...	52,000

The fall is attributed to two causes (1) increase in the production of matches within the country and (2) the heavy duties on imported matches.

**INDIA'S ECONOMIC POSITION—SOME HOPEFUL FEATURES**

Some hopeful features in the present economic position of India were referred

\* A Bengali Journal of Economics edited by Professor Benoy Kumar Sarkar.

to by Mr. P. W. Thorns, Professor of Economics, Madras University, in "a speech delivered before the Madras Economic Association." Those features are, to quote the speaker himself.

"Firstly, the comparatively self-sufficient economy of India which makes an external market necessary for only a small percentage of its total production has enabled this country to face the depression better than most of the specialist industrial and agricultural countries which have in the past played a much larger role in world economy. Secondly, the diversified structure of Indian agriculture—the wise mingling of many food crops with some money crops nearly everywhere—staved off starvation and stood the rural folk in good stead at a time when the more powerful agriculturists of America and Australia were in the doldrums.

"Thirdly, the remarkable increase in industrial production, helped by productive tariff and cheap capital, came as a god-send to urban labourers and made up for the loss of employment resulting from the rapid fall in the Government's public works expenditure. The extent of this industrial expansion has not been fully realized. The production of sugar increased by 500 per cent since 1929; in other lines, the increase has not been so phenomenal, but talking of the major industries, the increase between 1929 and 1935 has been about 45 per cent. During the same period industrial production in most of the Western countries declined rapidly. It was fortunate that such an improvement took place at a time when India's export trade was falling and imports were becoming too expensive to purchase."

The extract is taken from the *Statesman* of March 25, 1936.

#### GERMAN RECOVERY

What is at the root of economic recovery in Germany? Not natural recovery on the part of business, but huge Government spending for public works and the re-armament programme. The necessary means are said to be found from credit expansion. The extent of the credit expansion would appear from the following figures :—

	Feb. 1935	Dec. 31st 1934	June 30th 1935
Short-term Government debt ...	1,987	4,760	5,725
Employment creation bills ...	0	2,600	2,143
Special bills (approximately) ...	0	700	3,000
To be deducted due to duplications† ...	300	1,350	1,380
Total ...	1,700	6,700	9,500

The figures are in millions of marks.

The figures are taken from an article on "The Miracle of German Recovery" by George M. Katona in the "Foreign Affairs" (New York) for January 1936.

The said writer says that credit expansion has been going on at the rate of 600 million marks per month.

He opines that the credit expansion has already reached 'the danger zone' and that either Germany must effect rigorous economics, which would increase unemployment or, the extent of the inflation would lead to the condition of 1923, thereby dealing a death-blow on the saving classes.

There is, however, a third way out, viz. in natural recovery on the part of business.

† A part of the Treasury certificates was issued to guarantee the payment of Government bills.

## BLESSED ANGELA OF FOLIGNO

BY WOLFRAM H. KOCH

"Vos estis tam sancti sicut vultis"—  
"You are as holy as it is your wish to be"—

*Ruysbroeck*

The green valleys and murmuring streams of Umbria have been the silent witnesses of many a saintly life and of many a heart given to God and to the fulfilment of His will, and Umbria's cities and villages in the planes and the hills—beginning with Assisi, the home of the Poverello—preserve almost without exception the name or the holy memory of a saint. Whoever travels through those parts with an open eye and ear is met at every step by the luminous record of some holy life, spent in the service of the Divine and humanity, that has left an indelible impression in the hearts of the people.

In one of these places, Foligno, Blessed Angela was born in the year 1249. The first part of her life was given to worldly pursuits and worldly ambitions. She married, had a number of children, and was so possessed by worldly thoughts and wishes, that she wholly neglected her religious duties, going even so far as to make fun of all those who tried to bring her closer to that which is unchanging.

Then, all of a sudden, as in the case of many a saint, there came a great change over her. One night in a dream she heard a voice asking her to alter the course of her life. So, the following day, while crossing the Cathedral Square, she decided to enter the church for a few moments, where she listened to the words of a monk who happened to be preaching when she came in. And there a great light illumined her soul, making the indefinite yearning of

her heart all the more strong and inexorable. A short time afterwards death carried away her husband and all her children, leaving her free to follow and to fulfil her mission in the world. She sold her house and her estates, distributed the proceeds amongst the poor and the helpless, and began to dedicate her whole life to God, freeing herself from all worldly obstacles and following Christ's but all too often forgotten commandment: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

For, after her dream the idea of giving herself wholly and unconditionally to God alone had goaded her on to ask Him to release her from all worldly ties, including those of her family, and there is a passage in her works which gives us a glimpse of her state and the all-consuming fire of her dispassion, where she says:

"It so happened that through the will of God my mother who had been a great obstacle in the way I had begun to follow, died. Shortly after that, death carried away my husband and all my children. But having asked God to liberate me from all obstacles when I began my penitence, I felt a great consolation at their death, although suffering very much in the flesh. From that time onwards, God having granted me His grace, my only thought was that my heart should always be one with the heart and the will of God, and that the will of God and His heart would on their part be one with mine."



She knew that "all worldly love shall grow and perish as the flower of the field in summer, and shall be joying no more but as it were one day, so sickly shall it last a short while, but after that end in sorrow. And so doubtless it shall be bitter to fond lovers. Their pride and play in false beauty shall be cast into filth, that shall be with them endlessly when they are downcast into torments", as the Hermit of Hampole has said. And knowing this, she consciously turned away from all time-bound emotions and gave herself to that one Love which alone knows no change and no fear.

Many critics, not understanding such depths of spiritual yearning, have severely condemned this attitude and found her heartless and self-centred to a degree, but when seen in the right light and perspective, sacrificing the lesser to the greater, sacrificing what, at least to some extent, is exclusive and belongs to the domain of "I" and "Mine", to the all-inclusive, can never be taken as a sign of heartlessness, but it is a sure indication of the dawn of the true spirit of brotherhood and non-attachment in a soul.

How could Christ have said to His mother: "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" How could He have answered those who came to tell Him that His mother and brothers were standing outside: "Who is my mother and who are my brethren? My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God and do it." Or how could He have gone to the Samaritans if He recognized or approved of our narrow, exclusive feelings and pride of tribe and family, which are always apt to darken our horizon to the eternal truths of the Divine through attachments that are ~~nothing~~ but a form of expanded egoism ~~as soon~~ as all our relations with others

are not seen against the unchanging background of the all-inclusive who is eternally beyond our narrow conceptions of family and tribe, which in many cases are but attempts at and excuses for self-aggrandizement. So long as this is not clearly recognized in the life of the devotee, all his "solutions" of the spiritual problem and the love of God remain ideational only and bear no real and lasting fruits. So there is the beautiful passage in the *Brihadâranyaka-Upanishad*, which says:

"It is not for the sake of the husband, my dear, that he is loved, but for the sake of the Self that he is loved. It is not for the sake of the wife, my dear, that the wife is loved, but for the sake of the Self that she is loved. . . It is not for the sake of all, my dear, that all is loved, but for the sake of the Self that it is loved. The Self, my dear Maitreyi, should be realized, should be heard of, reflected on and meditated upon. By the realization of the Self, my dear, through hearing, reflection and meditation, all this is known."

Near Spello, on her way to the tomb of Saint Francis, Angela had her first vision, where the Spirit told her: "I am come to bring thee happiness. I shall accompany thee as far as Saint Francis, conversing with thee and making thee taste Divine pleasures. I am He Who spoke to the Apostles. I am the Spirit. Do not be afraid. I am thy Saviour. I have been crucified for thee. I suffered hunger and thirst, and loved thee so greatly that I shed my blood for thy sake. Ask any grace for thyself and for thy companions. It shall be granted thee."

And then the vision accompanied her up to the tomb of Saint Francis and stayed with her till she left the Church. When ~~it~~ left her, she fell

down in a swoon on the threshold, crying: "Love, Love, having scarcely known Thee, Thou hast forsaken me again!"

After her return home she confided everything to her confessor, Brother Amaldo, who ordered her to reveal all the secrets of her soul, all the consolations showered on her by the Lord, he himself writing down under her dictation the account of everything she saw and heard. But when this was read to her later, she asked in great surprise: "But did I say this? Ah, words cannot render my thoughts. My secret will remain mine", for to her it seemed as if of the fire which was consuming her heart only a little ashes remained and only a few miserable sparks had been caught and preserved. But then what a warmth these "sparks" still emanate even today if carefully studied!

As in the lives of all mystics we find periods of great coldness and desolation sweeping over her, alternating with moments of great spiritual illumination and ardour—the dark night of the soul. At such times terrible temptations assailed her, making her quail and implore death to liberate her from fleshy bonds, which made Saint Francis of Sales say of her: "None alter Job ever had to undergo harder tests than she." The Spirit returned to her sometimes only after weeks and weeks of agony, of coldness and desperation, consoling her and giving her unspeakable joy and bliss. And on such occasions her words would attain poetic heights and a clarity of expression which find but few parallels in the literature of her times, where she, the illiterate woman, rises, though without her knowing or even wishing it, to the very summits of eloquence and art.

But nobody who is consumed by the Divine Fire of Love can live long.

Her body very soon began to give way under its onslaught, not being made to dwell in regions generally denied to embodied beings. About Christmas 1308, feeling her end approaching, Blessed Angela called her faithful companions round her bed and dictated them the following will:

"Love one another, and let your humility be deep. I leave all I possess to you, all I had from Jesus Christ: poverty, the scorn of the world, pain. Those who will accept such a heritage will be my children indeed; they will be the children of God, destined for Life Eternal."

After a short silence she laid her hand on the head of each of her companions, saying: "Be blessed, my dear ones, blessed by the Lord and by me. Be blessed all, you who are present, and all those who will come in future. Christ gives you His blessings with His hand warm with blood as it was when He was crucified." After that there reigned deep silence. Her body that had been tortured by terrible pain for some time past seemed to find rest in a deep stillness. Only her face radiated superhuman joy and bliss. Thus she passed away in peace and blissful serenity on the 4th of January, 1309.

Few in number though they be, her works are splendid jewels of the religious literature of the Italian Trecento. Among much that is narrow and limited in outlook they contain treasures well worth preserving for all times, treasures which are a real joy for all those who appreciate true art and the deep consolations of Divine thought given through one of the innumerable instruments of the Divine for the awakening of poor blind-folded and greed-intoxicated humanity. Angela's words may be but a melody played on a single string, but their

sweetness is such that they will find their way into many a heart, raising it to the Divine and helping it in transcending its lower nature.

The following passages are taken from the "Way of the Cross" (*La via della Croce*) and from Angela of Foligno's most famous work, "The Book of the Wonderful Visions, Consolations and Instructions" (*Il libro delle mirabili visioni, consolazioni e istruzioni*).

"The highest good of the soul is true and perfect peace, without which no other good satisfies the reasonable soul. So the soul should endeavour to gain true peace in itself, which peace cannot be had without perfect love of the Creator, rest being found in the perfect love of God. Thus whoever desires perfect rest should seek to love God with his whole heart, for in such a heart dwells God, Who alone gives and Who alone can give peace. Now, he who desires to love God perfectly must divest himself completely of the love of every creature, so that there be nothing between himself and God. And the number of things standing between is equal to that of those which man loves and can love except God. To put it shortly: Whoever desires to gain perfect peace should remove all other love and should not love anything but God or for God's sake, for then he will soon attain that true love which is so hard in the beginning. One must walk along the thorny path of the Cross of Christ, which is the only way that leads the soul to the peace which the world cannot give."

"Now if you wish to know the Way of the Cross and what it is like, learn what has been revealed about it to a saintly person, who, desiring to know and find anew the Way of the Cross, ~~was~~<sup>was</sup> inspired by the Lord that she must ~~not~~<sup>not</sup> despoil herself in order that she

might, naked and all the more lightly, pass on to the Cross, viz. that she must forgive all those who might have offended her, then divest herself of all earthly things and of the love of all men and all women, of friends and relations, of parents, and finally of all love for herself, thus giving her whole heart without anything standing between to Blessed Christ. Now behold, my soul, how the Lord desires thee without any created love or any burden of worldly things standing between, and begin walking along the Way of the Cross."

"And the very first beginning should be that thou separate thyself from all love for earthly things. Nay, love and serve poverty as much as thou canst, following the advice of Christ, our highest and perfect Master in Whom from His birth by the Virgin till His death on the Cross thou dost not find anything but the greatest poverty, however hard thou mayest seek. O safe way, quick way, pure way, holy way, Poverty of Jesus Christ, which He wishes to find in His perfect disciple, as He says in the Gospel that he who does not renounce all things he possesses cannot be His disciple."

"Leave the things of the world and naked follow Christ Who for thee wished to die naked on the Cross. Thou too must be naked, O my soul, thou who wishest to be a perfect disciple of Jesus Christ, having to fight continually against evil spirits who are naked and do not possess anything in this world. I tell thee that he who fights dressed against a naked person can very soon be thrown on the ground, for he has something by which he can be caught and held fast. Thus whoever wishes to gain victory over his enemy should throw away all garments, so that he may not be caught by them and to fall. And the gar-

ments of the human body are all earthly things."

Blessed Angela of Foligno stresses poverty again and again in a true Franciscan spirit and makes of it one of the pivots and chief supports of all spiritual life. So she says :

"If thou possess perfect poverty, O my soul, thou shalt have removed the things which prevent thee from uniting and from communing perfectly with the highest Master. And it has been said that the first step to this perfect poverty is not to possess or to wish for the things of the world except in so far as they are sufficient for our barest needs. But even this poverty does not suffice thee, O my soul, if thou dost not separate thyself from the love of all persons, even from that for father and mother, but daughter and son, and from all love for thine own body. And thou shouldst realize how greatly such love for thy parents and all others separates thee from the true love of the highest Father, Eternal God. For then thou hast put something between thee and God, when thou lovest anything that separates thee from His love. This is the reason, as has been said by a very holy person, why many who seem to be highly spiritual, are deluded, who, however hard austerities and penance they may undergo, living in continual discipline of the body, do not reach a perfect state, because they cherish for themselves or for some other creature some affection which stands between them and God. And because of this standing between, which they keep, they change their minds and do not remain steady."

No doubt, the above attitude and advice will seem extreme to many readers who do not see the deeper problems of spiritual life, but prefer to remain in the shallow waters of merely moral actions and purely moral duties,

prevented as they are, through their manifold attachments, from realizing the true implications of Christ's teachings as well as of those of other Great Ones and God-men. As has been said before, sacrificing the lesser for that which is greater, sacrificing the small bonds and affections of human life for the sake of something more inclusive in which, at the same time, everything else is contained, does not mean any lack of love or responsibility. On the contrary, it means allowing ourselves to be ruled by higher forms of both which exclude all our littleness and narrow affections which have only our inordinate clinging to the ego, garbed in such forms of love, as their centre. The human mind always tries to delude us as to the real issues at hand, giving eternal values to many things which are but subtler expressions of our pleasure-seeking and self-centred instincts. When reading such passages it should never be forgotten that mystics like Angela of Foligno gave their whole life, in fact all they possessed, to God and spent it in His service, and for that very reason, they had to destroy all narrowness of affection, even that for their nearest and dearest, and were not to be deluded by their own egoism coming in the garb of duty to their own limited circle. Who of the people mercilessly criticising such an attitude and instruction would be ready to sacrifice even the tenth part of what Angela of Foligno sacrificed for the sake of the highest and the only eternal ideal?

"Remove all things that stand between and raise thy heart so that it does not love inordinately any created thing, neither ourselves nor outside ourselves. And if a person is not placed in such a condition that he can do without possessions or wealth, he should at least have his heart empty

of all love for them. And if he comes to lose them, he should be pleased and take this as a great gift from God."

"But even this poverty does not lead thee to perfect peace if thou dost not possess something else. Thou wouldst be little acceptable to God, even being despoiled of earthly and worldly things, if thou wert dressed and burdened with vices and wouldst not despoil thyself wholly of all carnal appetites. Thus thou needs must divest thyself of every vice and make thy soul and thy body continually to live in following the Cross of Christ, so that thou wouldst not satisfy neither thy soul nor thy body with anything if this be not a cause and a way to make thee unite with Blessed Christ."

Now we shall take up some passages from her best known work, "The Book of the wonderful Visions, Consolations and Instructions" (*Il libro delle mirabili visioni, consolazioni e istruzioni*) which has been translated into some of the most important European languages.

"I realized that if I desired to move towards Jesus Christ I had to divest myself of myself in order to be lighter and more free, i.e. I had to forgive all those who had offended me, to put away all earthly anxiety, to forget that I was living amidst men, to detach myself from all friends, from parents and from all persons I knew, to free myself from all my possessions and from myself, and to give my whole heart to Christ Who had shown me so much grace, and to walk along the narrow path, along the difficult path of tribulation."

"After having had the vision in which God showed Himself to me as Power and Will and Justice integrating and harmonizing themselves, I was elevated higher still. And then I did not behold either Power or Will or

Justice in the manner I have told. I beheld something stable, united and evident, of which it is absolutely impossible for me to say anything except that I felt in it every Good synthesized. But I did not even succeed in seeing all this Good as something separate from the rest. It was, in short, the unspeakable, the incomprehensible Whole."

"And at this sight my soul left the state in which it had been before and lost itself in an ineffable ecstasy; I do not know whether in the body or out of it. I only felt that for me, during this Divine Intoxication, nothing existed of my past life."

"This vision left in me the annihilation of vice and the certainty of virtue, so that from that time I love good and evil, guilt and virtue, because I feel that nothing can break the harmony of the Divine Law."

"The true depth of this vision lies in that, that all is useful for the righteous man, good as well as evil, virtue as well as vice. And the soul which has this intelligence of the Divine decrees and of their profundity shall have its fruit in God."

"When returning from having tasted this Divine Love I feel wholly contented and angelic and I even love fools and murderers and the very demons. And while immersed in this ineffable fullness, I would not feel any pain if a dog were to bite me, nay, I should not be aware of it even. Then I have no painful memory of the Passion of Christ, nor could I have it, the very idea of tears being contradictory to this love. So the Passion of Christ has become nothing but a luminous way of life to me."

"Once I was lifted up in spirit and beheld God with a clearness and a fullness as never before. In this vision I no longer saw God as Love even, nay,

I myself lost the love I was carrying in myself and became non-love. Then I beheld God as a Darkness. And if I say 'darkness' I mean to indicate something so perfect in itself that It cannot but appear to us as a negation as It surpasses the limits of our thought and intelligence."

"As the Divine Whole is all darkness, I see It with greater certainty and greater superhuman power, the more It appears to me in the darkness and silence of the ineffable. From the day on which I beheld this darkness which surpasses all perfection, darkness seems to me light, and all that is beauty and light of the spirit here below seems to me but true and blackest gloom."

"When I beheld God in the most absolute darkness I feel neither joy nor fervour, nor devotion, nor love. My body does not tremble, is not agitated, is not moved; it is listless, rigid in absolute negation, in absolute silence which paralyzes the tongue in the mouth. Only the transhumanized soul beholds."

The above quotations from Angela of Foligno's Visions are in no way exhaustive. In fact, they could never be so as there is no doubt that the book should be read carefully as a whole if one wants to be in a position to appreciate it and assess its true value.

We shall end with some passages taken from the 'Instructions' where she speaks about prayer and true Divine Love, clearly distinguishing the latter from all kinds of self-seeking and selfish prayer which is so common and can be found everywhere, no matter to what special religion or denomination the so-called pious person belongs. She says:

"Prayer requires a pure soul. Therefore endeavour to attain purity of mind and purity of body before entering into prayer. Delve into thyself, investigate

thy good works, uncover all thy bad actions, descend to the most hidden intentions behind thy fasts, prayers, and tears. Examine all thy faults and wrong-doings, one by one, and see that thy diligence be equal only to thy contempt."

"Man's perfection is knowing God's immensity and the nullity of the ego. Every negligence, every laziness is a darkening and a going away. Push them from thee. Approach and be the light."

"Guard thyself carefully from giving thyself to anybody before thou hast not learnt to separate thyself from others. Guard thyself from thine own fervours, i.e. from the spirit in which they have their origin, before they can create havoc. See what is their beginning, middle and end. Compare thy inspirations with the Book of Life, which is Christ, and if that is their direction, follow them."

"Whoever loves God in order that He may preserve him from infirmity and from the tribulations of the body and the dangers of the world, loves himself first and then God. He loves without order, for God must be loved first, before anything else, nay, all things should be loved only as works of God and through God alone."

"All the Good that becomes thought and action in us is the work of Uncreated Love, of that Love which does not become extinguished in itself in all eternity. His be the honour and the glory for all times to come."

The modern mind has the tendency of underrating the value of self-denial and asceticism in spiritual life, so there are many people by whom the spirit of Angela of Foligno's writings is taken to be something perverse and unhealthy, as the sign of an abnormal and diseased soul, but asceticism need not be negativistic or issue from an un-

healthy or unbalanced state of mind. True self-denial, true asceticism, as taught by all the Great Teachers and all the Saints of the East as well as of the West, is something positive, something heroic, purposeful and fearless, and it is just the opposite of unhealthy austerities and self-torture or mere abnegation, and is never made an end in itself. The earnest spiritual seeker must first reduce the claims of his body and his senses and all their clamourings to a minimum so as to liberate enough energy to be used on higher planes of activity. And as soon as a man realizes the existence of higher truths, he must rise above the considerations of his physical cravings and emotional longings and lower affections, for the sake of himself as well as for the welfare of others. Being non-attached himself, he must not create attachment in those whom he meets. Angela of Foligno's message is essentially the message of egolessness, the message of that Indian Saint who sings :

"Thou alone art; and all is Thine; neither I nor Mine have any being, yet

man calleth thee, I and Mine", clothed in a Christian garb and in Christian imagery : the timeless message of the One Eternal Reality and of the shadowy and unstable nature of the "I" and its companions and handmaidens.

Even now in the stillness of some Umbrian valley or walking over some Umbrian passes with the planes lying far below in the shimmering light of an Italian autumn day, the saints of Umbria seem to accompany us, making us penetrate more and more into the deeper significance of their words : realities and meanings that may even be deeper than they themselves ever realized or divined, being but the strings in the hands of the Divine Player.

"Thou alone art and the universe is Thine; yet man in his conceit saith I and Mine. Thou alone art; and death cannot kill Thee; but I and Mine will presently die. Thou alone art; Thou art Thine Own Self; but I and Mine are nowhere. Thou alone art; and Thine alone will cross this ocean." (*Dadu*)

## LIGHT ON THE PATH

O Mind, come let us hasten hence  
Once more to our beloved home !  
Why through this world, this foreign land,  
Dost thou in guise of stranger roam ?  
Not one thou seest here is thine,  
But all present an unknown face :  
Ah, why dost thou thine own forget,  
Enamoured of this alien race ?

O Mind, spring up the rugged path  
Of Truth ! Let Love thy lantern be !  
For treasure all the Virtues hide  
Safe in thy purse, in secrecy !  
Lust, Hate, and Error are the thieves  
Who wait to steal thy pilgrim's gold ;  
But Calmness keep, and Self-restraint,  
To guard thee, thy two watchmen bold !

A shelter, called Companionship  
 Of Holy Men, lies on that way :  
 There rest when weary, there inquire  
 Thy path if thou shouldst go astray.  
 But if thou findest cause for fright,  
 Call on thy Sovereign's name in prayer :  
 For He is monarch of that road,  
 And Death himself defenceless there !\*

\* TRANSLATED BY JOHN MOFFITT FROM THE NOTED BENGALI SONG, E.G. "MANA CHALA  
 NIJA NIKETANE. . . ."

## HINDU MYTHOLOGY

BY SWAMI VIVIDISHANANDA

Every religion has its philosophy, ritual, and mythology. Philosophy may be described as its foundation, ritual its superstructure, and mythology its detailed decoration. Without philosophy a religion becomes narrow, fanatical, and superstitious; without ritual it turns into a bundle of theories having no applicability in life; and without mythology it is dull and unattractive, and as such, unintelligible to the masses who do not understand abstract principles and metaphysical discussions.

Hinduism is fortunate in not only having a deep philosophy and an elaborate system of rituals, it has also an inexhaustible supply of mythology.

In the hushed silence of the evening, children of a Hindu home gather around their grandparents in a corner of the house lit by an earthen lamp and listen spellbound to the stories drawn from the *Purāṇas*, the mythologies. From time immemorial in India this story-telling has been one of the most interesting and effective means of instilling higher ideas and ideals into the minds of children, the future nation.

We shall present here a few of such stories.

Long long ago the gods entered into an alliance with the demons and undertook to churn the ocean which is supposed to be the receptacle of the priceless treasures of the world. Mount Mandāra was used as the churning stick and Vāsuki, the King of serpents, as the rope. The gods caught hold of the serpent's tail, whereas the demons his head, and they started churning, which continued for years. The flames of the serpent's poisonous breath scorched the faces of the demons, but the clouds which drifted towards his tail refreshed the gods with cool life-giving showers. All eyes were intent on the results as both the parties laboured night and day.

At last, lo and behold, from the ocean rose the Wish-bestowing cow, gladdening the bystanders, followed by the successive appearance of the Divinity of Wine; the Celestial Tree, perfuming all the world with the fragrance of its flowers; the Heavenly Nymphs of entrancing loveliness and grace; the comely Moon; the Divine Physician, holding in his hand a cup of the dew of life, the ambrosia; and the Goddess of Prosperity, radiant and beautiful



beyond comparison, seated on an open lotus.

It was the climax, sending a thrill of unspeakable joy and bliss to the gods, demons and all. The Sky-elephants anointed the Goddess with pure water poured from golden vessels, the Milky Sea adorned her with a garland of unfading flowers, and the World-architect decked her with celestial jewels, while the enraptured saints and sages poured forth their songs of praise.

There was a rush and scramble amongst all for the treasures, each wanting to have the best and costliest. Last, to the dismay, consternation and horror of all, upsprang the deadliest of poisons, threatening the wholesale destruction of the universe. Who would drink the poison and save creation? The gods and the demons, quailing with fear, stood speechless and inactive.

Siva watched from a distance the whole thing and overpowered by a supreme compassion came to the rescue without any consideration for his own life, drinking gladly the poison which gave a blue streak to his throat. And since then Siva became the God of gods, commanding the greatest respect, admiration, and homage of both the mortals and the immortals and standing unique because of his unparalleled sacrifice.

Is not this story poetic and fascinating, having a lesson of superb value? We shall pass on to our next story.

One day the Mother of the universe wanted to test the intelligence of Her children and gathered around Her the whole household. Lakshmi, the Goddess of Wealth, and Saraswati, the Goddess of Learning—the two daughters, came followed by Ganesa, the God of Success and Wisdom, and Kârtikeya, the God of Warfare. All were eager to hear what the Mother had to say. At last, breaking the silence the Mother

said, "Children, who amongst you can go around the world and return to me the quickest? To the winner goes this precious necklace of mine, a gift from my father. Let the boys try first."

Kârtikeya, very optimistic, smart and quick, rode his fast-moving peacock and started on the race. Ganesa, to all appearances, queer, slow and heavy, did not make any effort to move from his seat till his brother must have traversed a great territory. The Mother of the universe is the energy, the source of everything, omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. In Her we live, move, and have our being. By going around Her one accomplishes the circumambulation of the whole universe. By pleasing Her one pleases all. Thinking thus, Ganesa like a true philosopher simply walked around the Mother, and as an act of love and worship bowed down to Her, taking the dust of Her feet.

Supremely pleased with Ganesa's intelligence the Mother embraced him and blessed him, giving him the precious necklace. Kârtikeya returned home tired and worn out and yet hopeful that he would be the winner. But to the surprise and disappointment, he found that his fat brother had already gained the victory, sitting jubilant with the necklace around his neck. The Mother explained the mystery and it was a great lesson to all.

This story has a great moral, the purport of which is that if we realize God we shall get all that we seek and more, for He is the fountain of everything that we prize in life. We shall now tell our concluding story.

Aswapati, the king of Avanti, had a daughter, Sâvitri by name. She was exceptionally accomplished as she was exquisitely beautiful. No wonder that she would be the most beloved of her parents and people who considered her

a precious diamond adorning the court of Avanti.

Fond of travelling she would often go out with her maid and visit the different parts of her father's kingdom. In the course of one of such travels she came to a forest-retreat where she met a young man named Satyavân. Attracted by his beauty and the rare qualities of his head and heart, she fell desperately in love with him and wanted to marry him. On inquiry it was found out that the young man was the son of the king of Sâlva, who, driven out of his kingdom, had been living in the forest with his family in exile.

In spite of the present poverty of Satyavân's family, considering his royal parentage and his personal qualifications the match was desirable in every way. But Sâvitri's parents could not think of giving away their daughter in marriage to one who was destined to die within a year, for that was the reading of the astrologers. Both the king and the queen tried in vain to dissuade Sâvitri who was firm as adamant. She had given her heart to Satyavân and was resolved to marry him at any cost.

The marriage ceremony being solemnized, Sâvitri left the capital and went to live with her husband in his forest-abode. Although deprived of the comforts she had been used to, she considered herself the happiest creature on earth. She shared with her husband the joys and sorrows of life and was a real soul-mate. She nursed and cared for her husband's aged broken-hearted parents, cooked their meals and did all the work of the household. In this way a year rolled by and the fatal day came. Satyavân did not know anything about it, but Sâvitri counted the day to the minute and resolved to be by her husband's side at the time.

Satyavân was going out into the forest to collect firewood and fruit. Sâvitri

begged to be allowed to accompany him, and they went happily on clasping each other's hands. Time flew unknown to both till the sun went down, enveloping the forest with darkness. As they were about to return home, Satyavân complained of a severe headache and fell down dead. Alone in a deep forest infested with wild beasts and deadly snakes, Sâvitri sat with the corpse of her husband—stricken with grief and not knowing what to do.

The messengers of Death came to take away the soul of dead Satyavân. But as Sâvitri sitting with her husband's dead body on her lap looked like a goddess surrounded by a divine light they dared not approach and had to go back.

Now Death himself came to the scene and had a similar experience. Standing at a distance he addressed Sâvitri: "Good and great woman, your husband is dead. Let me take his soul to the other world. There is no use being with him any more." Sâvitri silently rose and left the corpse. As Death was taking the soul out of Satyavân's body and was hastening away, he found Sâvitri following him. "My good girl, why are you coming with me? No living being can set his foot in the realm where I live. I will give you anything you want provided you do not follow me." Sâvitri was still pursuing him, determined to win back the life of her husband. In order to get rid of her, Death granted her successively three boons. By the first boon Sâvitri's father who had no son would be blessed with one. By the second boon her father-in-law who was blind would have his sight back. By the third boon her husband's family would get back their lost kingdom. After granting these boons Death thought that he would be able to escape the tenacious girl and started running. But Sâvitri followed him like a shadow. Death was really

bewildered. "Let me alone," said he annoyed, "Allow me to return to my kingdom. Ask for anything you want except your husband's life. It shall be given you." "If you are kind," replied Sâvitri, "may I have more than one son from Satyavân?" "Granted," unwittingly shouted Death, as he was hastening away. But Sâvitri was still at his heels. Death turned back dismayed and addressed Sâvitri, saying, "My good girl, you are trying the impossible. Your husband is dead. He cannot come back to life. Go home." "O great God," replied she, "How can I have more than one son from Satyavân if you take him away?"

Although puzzled, Death was immensely pleased with Sâvitri's intelligence, love, and devotion. "Most excellent girl," said he, "you are really divine. Your faith and devotion toward your husband is more than exemplary. As a reward, I shall for once do an act which

was never done before. Your husband shall live. Go home in peace."

In India there is the custom of repeating every morning before arising the names of holy persons as an act of ritual. As Sâvitri represents the ideal of Indian womanhood, her name, along with others, is on the lips of all every morning.

Myths are myths and should on no account be taken literally. They may be based upon facts or they may be simply allegories, with a good deal of poetical embellishment in either case. While studying them what one should look for is not the truth of every minute detail, but the moral and spiritual principles they stand for. Myths, whatever country they may come from, are valuable. Without them the religions of the world would undoubtedly be poorer. Students who would try to enter into their spirit and understand their inner significance, would always appreciate them.

## THE PUNJAB AND SRI RAMAKRISHNA

BY PROF. HIRA LALL CHOPRA, M.A.

Totâpuri, a Sadhu belonging to the Nāṅgā Sampradāya of Ludhiana visited Dakshineswar at a time when Sri Ramakrishna needed some light about Advaita Vedānta the most. A tall stout Punjabi who would constantly keep the fire lit by his side mocked at the very idea of Bhakti and would scoff at the humiliations which a Bhakta underwent for his Realization. He was an ardent adherent of Absolute Brahman and would not allow any Mâyâ to intercept the way. Sri Ramakrishna, a keen enquirer of all the various paths of Realization as he was, took time by the forelock and began a serious Anu-

bhava of the Advaita Vedānta, keeping to himself at the same time due consideration for devotion.

By various incidents and accidents that are narrated in details in the biography of Sri Ramakrishna, the Saint of Dakshineswar manifested to his Guru the powers of Mâyâ or Sakti whereas he learnt from him the mode of direct communion with the Absolute. In short, it was Totâpuri who for the first time taught Advaita Vedānta to the prospective Prophet of this age. He entered Dakshineswar in the capacity of a Guru and after a short stay he realized that he was more of a student

than a preceptor of Sri Ramakrishna when he left it.

The lessons on Advaita Vedânta imparted by Totâpuri were given with clearer exposition and more vivid explanation to Vivekananda by Sri Ramakrishna. After a diligent study of all the prevalent knowledge of his time, and being disappointed with it, Vivekananda met Sri Ramakrishna with his heart clean as a slate. Impressions engraved on it became permanent. Any subject or any topic that Vivekananda spoke about or wrote upon would give out the flavour of the philosophy of Advaita Vedânta. After his return from the West, invitations practically from all corners of the country poured upon him. He made a memorable tour of the whole of India visiting important cities and towns where at each place invariably he was welcomed as a victor and a saviour of Hinduism. Lahore, the capital of the land of Five Rivers could not be excluded. Thousands of thirsty souls of this province quenched their spiritual thirst with the sweet words of the Swami. At Lahore, for hours together he spoke on Vedânta and kept the audience spell-bound. That lecture is one of his masterpieces and classical utterances.

Amongst those who were making all arrangements for his lectures, was a youngman, who soon after passing his M.A. very creditably from the University of the Punjab, had recently been appointed a joint professor of Mathematics in Forman Christian College, Lahore. His name was Tirtha Rama Goswami. He invited Swami Vivekananda to his place and to a dinner also.

The words of the Swami kept ringing in the ears of Tirtha Rama long after they were spoken. Tirtha Rama, who was traversing the path of Bhakti, felt an abrupt change in himself and took to the study of Advaita Vedânta. The previous study of Islamic Sufism had already paved a way for him which required a little of method and systematic training. The Swami's visit supplied him with that. The inspiring message which came from the feeling heart of the Swami and falling from his shivering lips, reverberated throughout the province. It was a remarkable piece of oratory delivered eloquently by the Swami in a manner all his own.

These words hastened the Sannyâsa of Tirtha Rama who presented himself to the world in a new ochre-coloured garb with the name of Swami Rama Tirtha and visited Japan and America raising aloft the banner of Hinduism in far-off lands declaring hope and sympathy for the sophisticated multitudes of these lands, saturated with materialism. He carried on the unfinished task of Swami Vivekananda in the sphere of Vedânta and created an indelible impression of the greatness of India and Hinduism on the mind of everyone, who came in contact with him.

Bengal and the Punjab have always been sharing hands in heralding the cause of Religion and there was no reason why not at this juncture when the fangs of the civilization of the Twentieth Century were trying to crush the ideals of Hindu Culture, these two provinces should not have acted in harmony and unison to save the common cultural heritage of India.

# ATMABODHA

BY SWAMI SIDDHATMANANDA

**विविक्तदेश आसीनो विरागो विजितेन्द्रियः ।**

**भावयेदेकमात्मानं तमनन्तमनन्यधीः ॥ ३८ ॥**

विविक्तदेशे आसीनः Sitting in a solitary place विरागः free from attachment विजितेन्द्रियः with the senses controlled अनन्यधीः with undivided attention ( मन् becoming ) तं that अनन्त infinite एक one without a second आत्मानं the Ātman भावयेत् (one) should meditate on.

38. Retiring into a solitary place, being free from attachment, having controlled the senses and with unflinching devotion, one should meditate on the Ātman which is infinite and one without a second.

**आत्मन्येवाखिलं दृश्यं प्रविलाप्य धिया सुधीः ।**

**भावयेदेकमात्मानं निर्मलाकाशवत् सदा ॥ ३९ ॥**

अखिलं All दृश्यं visible objects धिया by discrimination आत्मनि एव in the Ātman alone प्रविलाप्य merging सुधीः a wise man सदा always निर्मलाकाशवत् ( undefiled ) like the clear sky एकं one without a second आत्मानं the Ātman भावयेत् should meditate on.

39. Merging all the visible objects in the Ātman alone, through discrimination, a wise man should meditate on the Ātman which is one without a second and is always (undefiled) like the clear sky.

**रूपवर्णादिकं सर्वं विहाय परमार्थवित् ।**

**परिपूर्णचिदानन्दस्वरूपेणावतिष्ठते ॥ ४० ॥**

परमार्थवित् The knower of the Supreme Truth सर्वं रूपवर्णादिकं all objects having form, colour, etc. विहाय abandoning परिपूर्णचिदानन्दस्वरूपेण in the state of having absolute Knowledge and Bliss अवतिष्ठते remains.

40. Giving up all forms and colours, etc., the knower of the Supreme Truth remains in the state of having absolute Knowledge and Bliss.

**ज्ञातृज्ञानज्ञेयभेदः परात्मनि न विद्यते ।**

**चिदानन्दैकरूपत्वाद्दीप्यते स्वयमेव सः ॥ ४१ ॥**

ज्ञातृज्ञानज्ञेयभेदः Differentiation of the knower, knowledge and knowable परात्मनि in the Supreme Self न विद्यते does not exist सः He ( the Supreme Self ; चिदानन्दैकरूपत्वात् being the essence of Knowledge and Bliss स्वयमेव in His own glory दीप्यते shines.

41. The differentiation of the knower, knowledge, and knowable does not exist in the Supreme Self who shines as absolute Knowledge and Bliss, in His own glory.

एवमात्मारणौ ध्यानमथने सततं कृते ।

उदितावगतिज्वाला सर्वाज्ञानेन्धनं दहेत् ॥ ४२ ॥

एवं Thus सततं constantly आत्मारणौ ध्यानमथने कृते meditation on the Âtman being done like the rubbing of two pieces of wood for kindling fire उदितावगतिज्वाला the flame of knowledge thus kindled सर्वाज्ञानेन्धनं the fuel of all ignorance दहेत् destroys.

42. As the flame kindled by the constant rubbing of two pieces of wood burns fuel so the flame of knowledge arising from the constant practice of meditation on the Âtman destroys all ignorance.

अरुणेनेव बोधेन पूर्वं सन्तमसे हृते ।

तत आविर्भवेदात्मा स्वयमेवांशुमानिव ॥ ४३ ॥

अरुणेनेव Like the light of the dawn (destroying beforehand intense darkness) बोधेन by the (dawning of) knowledge पूर्वं beforehand सन्तमसे हृते the delusion of the mind being destroyed ततः then आत्मा the Âtman स्वयमेव Itself अंशुमानिव like the sun आविर्भवेत् becomes manifest.

43. Just as the sun rises after the darkness has been removed by the light of the dawn even so the Âtman manifests Itself after the delusion of the mind has been destroyed by the dawn of knowledge.

आत्मा तु सततं प्राप्तोऽप्यप्राप्तवद्विद्यया ।

तन्नाशे प्राप्तवद्भाति स्वकण्ठाभरणं यथा ॥ ४४ ॥

आत्मा The Âtman तु expletive सततं ever प्राप्तोऽपि even though (it is) attained अपविद्यया due to ignorance अप्राप्तवत् (भाति) (appears) as not attained तन्नाशे that (ignorance) being destroyed यथा स्वकण्ठाभरणं like a necklace on one's own body (तथा so आत्मा the Âtman) प्राप्तवद्भाति appears as attained.

44. Though the Âtman is ever attained It appears to be unattained, due to ignorance. When it (ignorance) is destroyed, the Âtman appears as attained just as a necklace on one's own body (although the wearer sometimes thinks of having lost it through mistake).

स्थाणौ पुरुषवद् भ्रान्त्या कृता ब्रह्मणि जीवता ।

जीवस्य तात्त्विके रूपे तस्मिन् दृष्टे निवर्तते ॥ ४५ ॥

स्थाणौ पुरुषवत् As a stump of a tree is mistaken for a man भ्रान्त्या through delusion ब्रह्मणि on the Brahman जीवता कृता the Jivahood is superimposed जीवस्य of the Jiva तात्त्विके रूपे the real nature तस्मिन् दृष्टे that (Brahman) being known (जीवता) निवर्तते (the Jivahood) ceases.

45. As the stump of a tree is mistaken for a man so through delusion, the Jivahood is superimposed on the Brahman. The Jivahood ceases when its real nature—the Brahman is known.

तत्त्वस्वरूपानुभवादुत्पन्नं ज्ञानमञ्जसा ।

अहं ममेति चाज्ञानं बाधते दिग्भ्रमादिवत् ॥ ४६ ॥

तत्त्वस्वरूपानुभवदुत्पन्नं Arising from the realization of one's real nature ज्ञानं knowledge दिग्भ्रमादिवत् as the right knowledge of the path removes the confusion of directions अहं ममेति चाज्ञानं the ignorance such as 'I' and 'mine' चञ्चला immediately बाधते destroys.

46. As the right knowledge of the path removes the confusion of directions, so the knowledge arising from the realization of one's real nature, destroys immediately the ignorance such as 'I' and 'mine.'

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

*The Divine Incarnation or Avatāra* is an unpublished writing of Swami Vivekananda. . . . In the Editorial we have offered some suggestions for *The Uplift of Rural India*, and they are mainly those that touch the lives and the surroundings of the rural population. . . . Rev. Dr. Samuel H. Golden-son is Rabbi of the temple of Emanu-El, New York. *The Twin Messages of Ramakrishna* is the summary of a lecture delivered by him on the occasion of the Sri Ramakrishna Birth Centenary celebration, held in the New York Town Hall, March, 1936. . . . Dr. M. H. Syed stresses the need of faith, hope, courage, and also the will and patience of an investigator on the part of those who seek after *The Reality of Spiritual Life*. . . . Prof. Ashokanath Bhattacharya is a lecturer of Sanskrit in the University of Calcutta. *Different Types and Stages of Emancipation in Sankara's school of Vedānta* is a paper read by him in the Convention

of Religions, held at Puri under the auspices of the Sri Ramakrishna Birth Centenary celebration towards the end of June last. . . . Prof. Hiralal Jain belongs to King Edward College, Amraoti. *What Jainism stands for* is the summary of his speech delivered at the Convention of Religions in connection with the Sri Ramakrishna Birth Centenary celebration, held at Nagpur in March last. . . . *My Memories of Swami Vivekananda* is reprinted from the last June issue of *India and the World*. Martha Brown Fineke belongs to Mt. Holyoke College, U.S.A. . . . *Matters Economic* are some of the economic facts and figures which deserve the attention of those who are concerned with the industrial and commercial activities of modern India. They have been culled from different sources by Mr. Shib Chandra Dutt. . . . *Blessed Angela of Foligno* by Mr. Wolfram H. Koch gives an inspiring account of the saint's life and teachings. . . . *Hindu Mythology* by Swami Vividi-

shananda dwells upon some mythological stories of India in a simple, attractive form. . . . Prof. Hira Lall Chopra belongs to Sanatana Dharma College, Lahore. *The Punjab and Sri Ramakrishna* shows how Bengal and the Punjab share hands in heralding the cause of Religion.

### THE LOAD OF THE SÂSTRAS

Recently there has been some noise in the press about the Sâstras and their injunctions, and the names of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda have been bandied about by parties in support of one position or the other. In this connection the question of reason *vs.* authority has also been mooted. From what has appeared it is clear that there has been a lot of misunderstanding. It is therefore necessary to have a firm grasp on Ramakrishna-Vivekananda's ideas about them. We are far from asserting infallibility in what we say; we only claim the advantage of closer contact with the genuine tradition and the greater opportunity of knowing their views intimately. It must be made plain at the outset that Ramakrishna has to be understood through Vivekananda who was endowed with the fullest authority by the former to interpret and broadcast his ideas and to translate them into practice. On occasions Vivekananda had to fight his brother-disciples who at times took him to be a bit of a handful and a revolutionary. And once Vivekananda himself said to some of them that if they wanted to know Ramakrishna they must first try to know him. And they did not demur.

What were Vivekananda's views on the question of reason *vs.* authority? What would he have said about the attempts that are being made to bolster up the most hateful privileges, irrational practices and degrading customs in the

name of the Sâstras, but in utter defiance of reason and common sense? His bitterness against them knew no limits. His blasting denunciations of all sort of religious cant, sophistry, dogmatism and oppression that go against reason and common sense would do credit to firebrand communists. His ridicules and taunts picking out holes in the orthodox arguments supporting putrid practices specially revealed the devastating character of his controversial logic. He once remarked that the Indian manhood was being crushed down by the weight of the Sâstras and that the Indians must learn rather to stand upon them and view the world with the natural light of common sense. He attached the greatest importance to reason in human affairs. He had due respect for unimpeachable authority, but he never sacrificed reason at the altar of that 'demi-god'. For him it was infinitely superior to be a healthy and rational atheist than to be a gullible misologist. Says he :

"People who deny the efficacy of any rationalistic investigation into religion, seem to me somewhat to be contradicting themselves. . . . Now the question arises if the light of reason is able to judge between inspiration and inspiration, and if this light can uphold its standard when the quarrel is between prophet and prophet; if it has the power of understanding anything whatsoever of religion. If it has not, nothing can determine the hopeless fight of books and prophets which has been going on through ages; for it means that all religions are mere lies, hopelessly contradictory, without any constant idea of ethics. The proof of religion depends on the truth of the constitution of man, and not on any books. . . . These books are the outgoings, the effects of man's constitution; man made these books. We are yet to see the books that made man. Reason is equally an effect of that common cause, the constitution of man, where our appeal must be." (Complete Works Vol. I. pp. 366-368).

Again :

"Everything, it (religion) claims, must be



judged from the standpoint of reason. Why religions should claim that they are not bound to abide by the standpoint of reason, no one knows. If one does not take the standard of reason there cannot be any true judgment, even in the case of religions. . . There must be some independent authority, and that cannot be any book, but something which is universal ; and what is more universal than reason? It has been said that reason is not strong enough ; it does not always help us to get the Truth ; many times it makes mistakes, and therefore the conclusion is, that we must believe in the authority of a church! That was said to me by a Roman Catholic, but I could not see the logic of it. On the other hand I should say, if reason be so weak, a body of priests would be weaker, and I am not going to accept their verdict, but I will abide by my reason, because with all its weakness there is some chance of my getting at truth through it, while, by the other means, there is no such hope at all. We should therefore follow reason, and also sympathise with those who do not come to any sort of belief, following reason. For it is better that mankind should become atheists by following reason than blindly believe in the two hundred millions of gods on the authority of anybody." (*Ibid.* Vol. II. pp. 333-334). "Why was reason given us, if we have to believe? Is it not tremendously blasphemous to believe against reason? What right have we not to use the greatest gift that God has given to us? I am sure, God will pardon a man who will use his reason and cannot believe, rather than a man who believes blindly instead of using the faculties He has given him. He simply degrades his nature and goes down to the level of beasts, degrades his senses and dies. We must reason, and when reason proves to us the truth of these prophets and great men about whom the ancient books speak in every country, we will believe in them." (*Ibid.* Vol. VI. pp. 10-11).

Further :

"Stick to your reason until you reach something higher, and you will know it to be higher because it will not jar with reason. . . All religion is going beyond reason, but reason is the only guide to there. . . First hear, then reason and find out all that reason can give about Atman ; let the flood of reason flow over It, then take what remains. If nothing remains, thank God you have escaped a superstition." (*Ibid.* Vol. VII. p. 58).

As regards the authoritative nature of the sacred scriptures he remarks :

"Personally I take as much of the Vedas as agree with reason. . . Manu says in one place that that part of the Vedas which agrees with reason is the Vedas, and nothing else. Many of our philosophers have taken this view."

Vivekananda fought on both sides. He denounced the rut-bound orthodoxy ; still more he declaimed against spurious rationalism, the superstitions of science and modernism. Nothing was sacred and inviolable in his eyes which did not conform to common sense and reason. It is the height of impudence to drag in his name in support of outrageous customs having not vestige of reason and truth behind them.

#### HELPING THE DOWNTRODDEN

For sometime past a great stir is noticeable in the Hindu community, and some recent phenomena have caused a furore among reformers to rescue Hinduism from what is apprehended to be its impending annihilation. The dwindling ratio of the Hindu population, the threat of a section of the depressed classes to forsake the Hindu religion, and the vulpine eagerness of some missionaries of other faiths ready to fall on the carcase of Hinduism have all given a fillip to the reformer's zeal. It is heartening to realize that men are at last up against age-long abuses. But amid all such reforming activities there are certain features which cannot inspire genuine well-wishers of Hinduism with any amount of enthusiasm. We do not share the timid apprehension that Hinduism is bankrupt or that its impending doom is at hand. It has shown wonderful vitality through the ages and it still continues to show it. The eternal truths of Hinduism are not in the safe-keeping of a few handfuls.

They are still potent enough to live and to make ever newer conquests. The world needs them for its salvation. It is impossible for a keen student of world's thought-currents to escape the conviction. The Hindus have not lived through some of the darkest centuries in vain.

What we lament is not the reformer's zeal, for Hinduism (meaning thereby the Hindu Society) stands in need of a good deal of spring-cleaning, but a lack of inwardness and spiritual outlook among some of the reformers. Under a thin veneer of religiosity there is an ugly and active calculation of political and economic gains on either side. This has not only partially obscured real issues, but has also held out chimerical hopes to the depressed classes. To have a clear idea of the problem of the depressed classes it is necessary to view things in retrospect. What is meant by Hinduism? It has more a social import than a religious significance. Again how is it that the Hindu society came to be split up into thousands of sects and castes? It is a long and interesting story of which no Hindu need be ashamed. At some distant time a band of Aryan-speaking people came to India, who laid the basis of all the future culture and civilization of the country. In the course of time they were almost swamped by the indigenous population and the incoming hordes who periodically swept over the soil of India from beyond her borders. This almost ever-recurring problem of the welter of races and culture was solved not by the victors' scimitar but by a slow process of acceptance, assimilation, and absorption. For ages India has been a laboratory for religious, cultural and racial experiments, where conflicting elements have been united in a higher synthesis. Here the people lived and let others live. The problem

of different races and cultures was solved by a hierarchical organization of society and not by the annihilation of the vanquished as in many other parts of the world. Considering the contemporary conditions and the relatively undeveloped ideas of the time it must be said that India achieved a magnificent thing. But times are changed and the old order must yield place to the new. Privileges have to go. This is a social task. It does not entail the abandonment of one's religion and spiritual ideals.

Thus what was India's glory in the past has become its very handicap in the present. This has of course to be overcome. But all such reform must be based on a genuine spiritual outlook if it is to be enduring. Men have a habit of fighting for selfish ends in the name of righteousness. But that only prolongs troubles and obscures issues. Another question which obtrudes itself in this connection is whether the depressed classes will really improve their lot by forsaking the religion they were born in. No such magic transformation of their condition can be contemplated. Examples at least are not encouraging. It is because they will raise anew in the new communities the same problems which they brought to the Hindu society in days gone by. It is only culture which can raise them effectively. Unless there be transmission of culture no mere resolutions or granting of illusory privileges can be of any avail. And there can be no genuine transmission of culture and no preservation of Hinduism until the reformers proceed in a spirit of service and with a belief in the greatness of Hindu spiritual culture. History is full of examples how spiritual vitality has withered away among sections of men as a result of unintelligent reform.

## YOGA AND THE WEST

Of late the West has been much attracted by Yoga. But with its characteristically superficial outlook in spiritual matters it has generally misunderstood it as it has so often misunderstood almost everything Indian. Some have condemned Yoga as a mere flight-mechanism which enables the individual to shirk all sorts of social responsibility and to escape the hard realities of life. By some it has been hailed as a means of improving physical health or beauty or perhaps attaining a little mental efficiency. Others among whom can be counted some of the most learned have appraised it as a way of gaining power in the world—a most egotistical and ambitious venture. Still others have missed its universal character and have discovered in it only a particular, racial type of psycho-therapy. The fact is that the generality of men in the West seems temperamentally incapable of grasping the supreme value of things spiritual. They can appreciate them only by dragging them down to mundane levels or by assigning them values in terms of bread and butter. We far from hold that spiritual matters have no earthly significance or that is either wholly shameful or ridiculous to consider the earthly benefits of a spiritual outlook. The fact that has to be grasped is that spirituality far transcends in significance everything that can be measured by a calculus of worldly loss and profit.

It is therefore with some sense of surprise that we turn to an account of Yoga by Mr. Gerald Heard in an issue of *The Twentieth Century*. The author is an anthropologist and philosopher who has made valuable contributions

to the study of men, science, and religion. He believes that the modern civilization is surely heading towards self-destruction and that if it is at all to be saved it can be saved through Yoga alone. By Yoga practices he understands “the attempts to use consciousness as it is used on the outer world, but so as to explore the inner world of consciousness itself.” Again Yoga practices are, says he, an attempt “to recover the direct consciousness of our extra-individuality. This is not a matter of belief or dogma. It is an empirical procedure. It is an advanced psychology.” The bane of modern civilization has been its one-sided material advance which threatens to give rise to an “unquestioning individualism which will unhinge and derange society.” To balance the increasing command over the physical world when the mind becomes “cramped and shrunken into its specialized absorption with means and the mastery of matter, then the psycho-physical exercises of reunion with its whole life would again expand it to its full and right stature and dilate the narrowed focus of consciousness until it would again see the whole, and itself as part.” He believes it is Yoga alone which can give us the insight into and the knowledge of the solidarity of mankind, which is so essential for the salvation of modern civilization. It is by the collective practice of the discipline of Yoga that its teaching can be made real. The author might not have said the last word on Yoga or spiritual culture, but what he says at least comes very near to them. It is refreshing to learn at any rate that he has progressed much beyond the crude conceptions of Yoga held by the learned as well as the uninformed in the West.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**MEDIEVAL MYSTICISM OF INDIA.**  
By Kshilimohan Sen. *Luzac & Co., 46, Great Russell Street, London.* Pp. *xxx+241.*

The absence of genuine historical literature in India has been the subject of many trite observations. The charge is not wholly true even in the field of political history. But the hackneyed complaint betrays a failure to appreciate the living course of Indian history which has flowed along channels other than political. For good or ill the vicissitudes of political fortune have rarely troubled the masses of India. They have rarely questioned the *de facto* power and have patiently submitted to the yoke of rulers, fair, black, brown or yellow. Fates of courts and courtiers have been mostly ignored and remain comparatively unnoticed in literature and tradition. But to them who can discover the artery through which has coursed the life-blood of the people, there is no dearth of materials out of which to construct a genuine history. It may lack in chronological precision, but the logic and process of evolution are perfectly clear. It is the story of her spiritual venture through the ages.

The subject has so far attracted little attention, and there are portions in the field which have not as yet been scratched by the plough of investigation. In the present work the author has attempted to plough an almost virgin field, and though the yield is not abundant he deserves to be complimented for initiating a new venture. Originally delivered in Bengali as the Adhar Mookerjee Lecture at the Calcutta University in 1929, it briefly recounts the story of the mystics of Medieval India. The epithet medieval as applied to Indian mysticism has to be understood, the author points out, in a sense somewhat different from the usually accepted one in the West. True, there have already been a few works on the saints and the sects of India, notably, *The Religious Sects of the Hindus* (2 vols.) by the late Akshay Kumar Dutt, which has laid all future workers in the field under a permanent debt. The scope of the present work, however, is not exactly the same. It is at once narrower and wider. It not only seeks to avoid beaten tracks but aims to present hitherto unnoticed facts in the light of recent discoveries. The author has long interested

himself in the field, and his distinguished contributions in this direction have already earned him some reputation. The reader, therefore, naturally takes up the work with the expectation of finding an elaborate and authentic treatment. If, however, the reader is somewhat baffled in his anticipation on the first count, it is because the limitations imposed by the lectureship forbade any detailed handling of the subject; so that at places the book is hardly anything more than a mere catalogue of names of saints, their works and sects, and the account as a whole is jejune.

The central theme of the work which the author has tried to keep in the foreground is the story of India's "effort to bring about a synthesis in the midst of diversities of various kinds," during her middle ages. The book comprises two lectures, the one devoted to the orthodox thinkers, that is, those who were followers of tradition, customs and scriptures and the other to the liberal thinkers, that is, those who dispensed with the above and created a new tradition themselves. Though the material is abundant there are almost insuperable difficulties in the way of presenting a true history of the Indian Sādhana, not the least of them being *odium theologicum* and priestly white-washing. Some followers of particular sects have not hesitated even to burn old texts for fear of letting out what they considered to be troublesome facts. The account starts with the advent of Islam whose impact upon the Hindu society deepened and broadened the indigenous spiritual life. We first of all hear of the orthodox Mahomedan saints. It is a mistake to suppose that Islam conquered India only politically. To some extent she conquered her culturally also. But to achieve such a consummation, more was needed than the brutal might of Muslim soldiery. "It needed the coming of Mahomedan saints and Sādhakas for accomplishing such a task." They found ready materials for conversion among the downtrodden millions of India. These illustrious new comers appeared first in the Punjab and Sindh. Prominent among them were the famous Makhdam Saiyad Ali al Hujwiri, Khwājā Muinuddin Chishti of the Chishtiyya School of Sufism with his numerous follow-

ers, Bahauddin Zakaria, pioneer of the Suhrawardi sect in India, Shah Inayat Shah Latif, Bedil, Bekas and others. Some of them exerted a considerable influence upon certain sections of the Hindu community. These sufi saints were eyed with suspicion by the orthodox Muslims. Apart from some of their heterodox tendencies, these saints and their sects bore marked traces of the Hindu influence. The liberal influence of these saints permeated some Mahomedan writers also e.g. Abdul Rahim Khân Khânân who wrote an admirable poem named Rahim Satsai and to whom we are indebted for the preservation of the most of Surdas's devotional songs of Krishna, and Azam Shah, son of Aurangzeb, whose recension of the Satsai by the Vaishnava poet Bihâri "is admirably looked upon as the best of its kind event at the present time." Next we come to some orthodox Hindu saints, propounders of the Neo-Bhakti cult, like the Alvars of South India, Ramanujis, Mâdhva, Ananda Tirtha, Nimbarka, Vallabha and others, who "made efforts, in different ways, to keep their own religions and spiritual culture alive. A section of them tried to introduce liberal ideas with the maximum retention of old laws and customs, while the other section, in contrast with these virtual conservatives in the attempt of creating an unity and synthesis, paid least heed to old scriptures and customs." The liberal thinkers derided the orthodoxy of both the faiths, railed at ceremonials and externals and insisted upon a natural and healthy religion. It is said that the origin of such sects is lost in the mists of antiquity. Among the radical reformers of India Ramananda's name stands foremost. Next come others almost equally important namely, Kabir and Dâdu and their numerous followers. We hear of many such thinkers. Some attempts have been made at places to hint at their teachings and views. The saints, who did not found any sect or tradition, have been left out. All these liberal thinkers, the author remarks, "had a desire to establish through spiritual Sâdhanâ a brotherhood and a friendly unity among the followers of different religions. Sâdhakas after Sâdhakas exerted themselves for this end and they have either attained some degree of success or met failure, but a cessation of effort in this direction never occurred." One who goes through the works learns how modern religions and social reformers like Rammohun and Daya-

nanda have been anticipated in nearly all of their major aspects by a host of medieval saints. There are a number of appendices on Dâdu and the Bauls. The author has made a praiseworthy beginning. We await with interest further detailed work on the subject.

#### THE GREAT TEMPLE AT TANJORE.

By J. M. Somasundaram. *Printed at Salden & Co., Madras, S. E. Pp. 89. Price Re. 1 or 2 sh. net.*

This is a monograph on the Rajarajesvara or the Sri Brihadisvara Temple of Tanjore, which has been acclaimed by some as "by far the grandest temple in India". Built by Râjarâja the Great (985-1014 A.D.), it is the most magnificent monument of the might and ability of the Chola rulers. The temple is an example of the early Chola Art, but, as the author points out, during its subsequent history it came to contain additions and decorations at the hands of the posterity, so that a visitor can study, without leaving its precincts, something of later architecture of the South as well. The writer has collected the chief points of historical and traditional interest associated with the temple for the guidance of visitors. The work contains an adequate description of the plan of the temple. A number of plates of panellings, stone-reliefs, and sculptured and metal images enhances the usefulness of this guide.

**BULLETIN OF LEAGUE OF NATIONS TEACHING.** *Published every year by the Secretariat of the League of Nations, Geneva. Pp. 317.*

The League of Nations seems to function most successfully in its peace-time activities. This Bulletin is not of general interest, but is quite useful to teachers of history, geography, modern languages, and international relations—if those teachers wish to arouse international ideas in their students. It is especially valuable for its up-to-date bibliographies.

Those who wish to carry on propaganda in favour of the League will find many useful suggestions. There are articles describing the health services, fact-finding surveys, and other functions of the League in the non-political field, and detailed reports of all League activities in relation to education. K. M.

**BUDS AND BLOSSOMS.** By Tanguturi Sriramulu. *Published by the author,*

*Halkett's Gardens, Rajahmundry, South India. Pp. 80. Price Re. 1.*

A collection of poems in English. They always rhyme, and usually scan, regardless of the strain upon the meaning. The author's friends will probably be glad of an opportunity to get a collection of his writings.

K. M.

**PILGRIM'S STAFF.** By Ram B. Motwani. *Published by the author, Larkana, Sind. Pp. 128. Price Re. 1.*

This anthology of quotations follows the author's earlier collection, "Sacred Moments". It is made up of short selections, one for each day in the year, culled from such varied sources as the *Mahābhārata*, *Omar Khayam*, the English and American poets, the *Bible*, Annie Besant, and popular gospel hymns. It should be an interesting collection for those who read very little and like their moral instruction rhymed. This is the kind of a book people choose for a gift.

In all fairness, when the compiler of an anthology makes a book with other people's writings, he should give the sources of all his quotations. The book is neatly printed but inexcusably marred by numerous typographical errors which are no less irritating because they were belatedly discovered and listed at the end of the volume.

K. M.

**LAKSHMI'S TRIUMPH.** By D. S. Ramachandra Rao. *Published by G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. Pp. 212.*

Corey Ford, in one of his lighter moments, tells of a fleeing hero who "jumped on his horse and rode off in two directions". This delightful novel has attempted the even more impossible feat of going in several directions at once. It is admittedly propaganda for the Congress ideal, and a protest against the caste system in India. In addition, it is addressed to Western readers and seeks to give a picture of village life in South India. And some readers might think that it was propaganda for Christianity.

As Congress propaganda and a protest against caste, the book is far from effective because it is so obviously addressed to Western readers. The strength of the book lies in its picture of the changing social life in India. As a Westerner, I enjoyed the details of Indian life and the conversations which attempted to carry over into English the characteristics of village speech.

There are many minor errors in the author's English, his frequent homilies are by no means profound, and the book ends in a fog of visions. But there is a real need for novels which paint a true picture of Indian social conditions, and this book makes a good start in that direction. Much of it is very pleasant reading.

K. M.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### SRI RAMAKRISHNA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

#### EUROPE

The Birth Centenary was celebrated in many places of the Continent in May and June last.

At Warsaw where among the intellectuals there is a large number of disciples and admirers of the Master, the celebration consisted of holding of a public meeting where glowing tributes were paid to Indian culture and religion which, even in this materialistic age, could produce a Ramakrishna and a Vivekananda. Besides, the devotees issued memorial cards and published special articles in newspapers and magazines on the teachings of the Master,

on the occasion. Celebrations were also held at Wiesbaden and St. Moritz on a modest scale and newspapers published articles on the life of Sri Ramakrishna.

At Versoix near Geneva, a well-attended public meeting was held at the Institute Moonier, an international school, in celebration of the Centenary. Swami Yatiswarananda who is now in Europe in connection with the work of the Ramkrishna Mission, was specially invited to address the meeting. He spoke in English which was translated into French by an interpreter for the benefit of the audience which was mostly French. Swamiji spoke also at another meeting on the following day, on the message of Sri Ramakrishna and his lecture was illustrated by lantern slides. He was invited to speak

at two other meetings,—one held at Geneva and the other at Lausanne, in connection with the Centenary. As a result of the Swamiji's activities a small group has already been formed at Geneva who are taking steps to spread the message of Sri Ramakrishna all over the Continent. A Vedanta Society is being formed at this international city for the purpose of carrying on propaganda work.

In France, at the Sorbonne, two lectures were organized on the occasion of the Centenary celebration, by some professors of the University. This has resulted in awakening among the French people a keen desire to know more of India's spiritual treasures. To meet public demand, some of the works of Swami Vivekananda have already been translated into French and they are among the best sellers of religious and philosophical books in France today.

#### SINGAPORE

On the 24th of February last, the Tithi Puja of Sri Ramakrishna took place and was attended by the Vivekananda School children and a few interested members.

A meeting was held with a prayer and a welcome speech by the President of the Mission, Swami Bhaswarananda. Then Mrs. J. T. N. Handy commenced the day's proceedings by a introductory talk which was followed by three lectures two in English and one in Tamil.

The most enjoyable function of the evening was a concert staged by the Vivekananda School children. The first part was a dialogue depicting India, ancient and modern. The significance of the speeches and songs which were rendered in English and Hindi had a telling effect on the audience.

The 28th of February was specially chosen as the second day of the celebrations so as to enable the members as well as outsiders who reside in the Native State of Johore to be present in Singapore to take part in these activities. The Committee was highly gratified to find a large gathering of Johore residents and an equally good crowd of Singapore people. A keen interest was taken by the ladies on this day too.

On the 29th of February, a Conference of Religions was held. Nearly one thousand people comprising Indians (who were in the majority), Europeans, Eurasians, Chinese, Arabs, Persians, Siamese, and other nationalities were present. Representatives from

Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, and Hinduism explained briefly the essential tenets of their respective religions. This sort of religious gathering being unique in the history of Malaya was much appreciated by the people present.

The local Vivekananda Sanmarga Sangams Music Party conducted Bhajans on the first of March last, when all present irrespective of caste, creed, colour, and rank partook of the lunch specially arranged for the day. According to the programme the meeting was started. Mr. A. S. Ponnambalam was on the Chair, Mr. M. K. Chidambaram, B.A. spoke on "The Present State of Indian Society", and Mr. V. Chandra Raj on "Sri Ramakrishna and the Harmony of Religions", in Tamil.

Hindi Lectures were also delivered for the Hindi-speaking community. Mr. Jannadas Purushottam took the Chair. Mr. Bhagavan Bali Sharma and Mr. S. S. Varma were the speakers. They spoke on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and the Harmony of Religions respectively. After the lectures were over, the audience was entertained by Hindustani and Tamil Music.

#### PURI

A Convention of Religions was held at Puri in connection with the celebration of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary which came to a close on the 7th June last. The Raja Sahab of Puri, the Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcoming the delegates who represented different faiths and religions emphasized the essential unity of all religions and referred to the spirit of synthesis that marked out the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna from those of other prophets.

Swami Viswananda, the head of the Ramakrishna Asrama at Bombay, who presided over the Convention, said that the Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna was now being celebrated all the world over. Was it not significant, he asked, that savants and church dignitaries of Europe and America were enthusiastically participating in those celebrations?

Prominent among others who spoke at the Convention were Bhikku Maitteya of the Mahabodhi Society (Buddhism), Mr. I. A. Isaac (Judaism), Rev. J. Johnson (Protestantism), Rev. Father P. Tober (Catholicism), Moulvi Zahur Hossain of Lahore (Islam), and Pandit Dinesh Chandra Bhattacharyya.

On the closing day of the Convention, Mr. P. N. Banerjee delivered a lecture on the evolution of different religions in India from the Vedic period upto the present age and his lecture was illustrated by lantern slides.

Previous to the holding of the Convention of Religions, a ladies' meeting was held at the local Zilla School Hall, which was attended by many respectable ladies of the town and the sea-beach. Mrs. Hemmalata Tagore presided and prominent among those who spoke at the meeting were Srimati Sukhalata Rao, Srimati Manibala Devi, Srimati Chanchala Devi, Srimati Aparna Devi, and Fatema Begum.

The Centenary celebration concluded with Pujas and Homa performed at the Sri Ramakrishna Library, where in the afternoon there were readings from the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna. This was followed by the feeding of the poor whose number was about 1,200 altogether.

#### CALCUTTA COLLEGE STUDENTS' MEETING

Under the auspices of the Inter-Collegiate Students' Ramakrishna Centenary Committee a meeting was held on Tuesday, the 17th March at Asutosh College, Bhowanipur. Prof. Joygopal Banerjee of Calcutta University presided.

Prof. Jyotish Chandra Banerjee, Prof. Harinohan Bhattacharya and Swami Sambuddhananda addressed the meeting.

The President in conclusion delivered a thought-inspiring lecture. He pointed out the ideal aspects of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda movement which were 'Renunciation' and 'Service'—the characteristic aspects of the Indian nation. India has never been notorious for aggrandizement. The Rishis and saints of the Hindus have never preached their religion before the world by declaring that his religion is the best and only religion to be followed. Hinduism has never proselytized. To a Hindu religion is a question of realization and not an expansion by number. Self-realization is the ideal of Religion and self-realization can be attained only by renunciation. The learned speaker referred to the strict austerities and renunciation of Sri Ramakrishna. And the renunciation, evoked a universal love in him which has spread to-day all over the world. His love knew no restriction. He did not make any distinction between a man and a man, between the high and the low. It is his universal love and universal religious acceptance that stand as the noblest service to

humanity—and the apostle of these ideals is known to the world by his illustrious disciple Swami Vivekananda.

#### DHAN GOPAL MUKHERJI

We are greatly shocked to hear of the premature death, and that under tragic circumstances, of Mr. Dhan Gopal Mukherji in July last in New York. Mr. Mukherji was one of the limited number of Indians who have established their name as a writer in the field of English literature. Some of his books were the "best sellers" of the year in America. By reading his *The Face of Silence* Mon. Romain Rolland became interested in the lives and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, whose biography he himself afterwards wrote. By the death of Mr. Mukherji *Prabuddha Bharata* has lost one of its distinguished contributors.

Dhan Gopal Mukherji was born in the year 1890 in Calcutta. Led by a spirit of enterprise, he left the parental protection and care while still very young, and went to Japan. From there he went to America, where after passing through a period of great stress and struggle he made a name as a journalist, author and lecturer.

Though he lived practically his whole life in America, his love for Indian ideas and ideals remained unshaken. He was an ardent devotee of the Ramakrishna Mission, and got spiritual initiation from Swami Shivananda, the late lamented President of the Order. He visited India twice and had a mind to do so again at an early date. But alas, that was not to be! May his soul find that Bliss which he so eagerly sought for during his lifetime.

#### THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION FAMINE AND FLOOD RELIEF WORK

##### BENGAL FAMINE

Our workers from the different districts of Bengal inform us that the famine conditions are worsening as the cultivators are getting unemployed after finishing their season's work in the fields. We have therefore had to increase our doles. During the last four weeks ending on the 15th August, the Mission distributed 488 mds. 37 srs. of rice amongst 10,430 recipients. Of these, 389 mds. 23 srs. were given from Gabura, Jhapa and Nakipur centres of the Khulna district amongst 8,118 recipients of 32



villages, while from the Joyrambati centre of the Bankura district 1,799 recipients of 21 villages got 74 mds. 28 srs. During the same period there were only two distributions from the newly opened Lakshmibati centre of the Birbhum district, in which 493 persons belonging to 23 villages received 24 mds. 26 srs. of rice. The Joyrambati centre distributed some new and old cloths.

#### ARAKAN FLOOD

The flood relief work in the Kyaukpyu district of Burma continued during the period. There were four centres at Cheduba, Thippon, Agareoh and Gangadaw. At the request of the Deputy Commissioner additional work was undertaken at the Ramree area. From the four centres in Cheduba Island 13,207 persons received doles of 940 mds. of rice weekly. Temporary dispensaries were opened in the distressed areas, and medical relief was given to many thousands.

#### BENGAL FLOOD

On receipt of an urgent call for help from our Malda centre in North Bengal, the Mission decided to start immediate flood relief measures for the distressed people of the district. Details of the work have not yet been received and will be published in our next report.

The funds at our disposal are getting exhausted, while the situation is becoming more desperate every day. The famine relief work in Bengal requires to be continued till the next harvest. We therefore appeal to

all to contribute to our funds so that thousands may be saved from starvation and death.

We have great pleasure in acknowledging with thanks the receipt of the following noteworthy contributions to our Famine Relief Fund during the period:—

Calcutta Baled Jute Association	...	Rs.	1,000	0	0
Sj. Sasi Bhusan Law, Calcutta	...	,,	100	0	0
Mr. B. N. Pal, Calcutta	...	,,	100	0	0
Dr. R. D. M o d i, Ahmedabad	...	,,	125	0	0
Raja Radha Raman, Pilibhit (2nd instalment)	...	,,	200	0	0
China Bazar Glassware and Enamelled Ware Dealers' Association, Calcutta	...	,,	500	0	0
The Save the Children Society, L o n d o n, through Lady Muriel Paget	...	£	46		

Contributions will be thankfully received at any of the following addresses:—

- (1) The President, Ramkrishna Mission, Belur Math P.O. Howrah Dist.
- (2) The Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 4, Wellington Lane, Calcutta.

(SD) SWAMI MADHAVANANDA,  
*Acting Secretary,*  
*Ramkrishna Mission.*  
*23rd August, 1936.*

# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

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## CLASS TALKS

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

### SALVATION FROM SIN

We are to be saved from sin by being saved from ignorance. Ignorance is the cause of which sin is the result.

### COMING BACK TO THE DIVINE MOTHER

When a nurse takes a baby out into the garden and plays with the baby, the Mother may send word to the baby to come indoors. The baby is absorbed in play, and says : “I won’t come; I do not want to eat.” After a while, the baby becomes disgusted with his play and says : “I will go to Mother.” The nurse says : “Here is a new doll,” but the baby says : “I do not care for dolls any more. I will go to Mother”, and he weeps until he goes. We are all babies. The

Mother is God. We are absorbed in seeking for money, wealth and all these things; but the time will come when we will awaken, and then this nature will try to give us more dolls, and we will say : “No, I have had enough, I will go to God”.

### NO INDIVIDUALITY APART FROM GOD

If we are inseparable from God, and always one, have we no individuality? Oh yes; that is God. Our individuality is God. This is not real individuality which you have now. You are coming towards that true one. Individuality means what cannot be divided. How can you call this state—we are now—individuality? One hour you are thinking one way, and the next hour another way, and two hours

after another way. Individuality is that which changes not. It would be tremendously dangerous for the present state to remain in eternity, then the thief would always remain a thief, and

the blackguard, a blackguard. If a baby died, he would have to remain a baby. The real individuality is that which never changes, and will never change, and that is God within us.

## THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT OF INDIA

BY THE EDITOR

### I

The distress of an average Indian, caused by unemployment and under-employment, is becoming more and more acute with the rapid change of economic conditions. The cost of living has increased in the ratio of 1 : 3.78 during the last forty years while the income has remained the same, and in the majority of cases especially among the middle classes and the labourers the income has in recent times abruptly and abnormally decreased. The rate of growth in the population of India is proportionate to her resources, still abject poverty has been for long reigning in every part of India. Ninety per cent. of the total population are constantly living in sight of the hunger line. One of the chief reasons for this is that the agricultural and industrial activities of India have been suffering from extreme maladjustment. In every advanced country agriculture and industries go hand in hand in order to attain an economic equilibrium. But in India it is much to be deplored that nearly 73 per cent. of the total population depend on agriculture and its allied occupations, whereas the corresponding figures in other countries are 10 per cent. in the United Kingdom, 22 per cent. in the United States of America, 30.5 per cent. in Germany, 38.3 per cent. in France, and 35 per cent. in Canada. Again, the

proportion of population dependent on industries in India is about 11.2 per cent., whereas the corresponding percentages for other countries are 39.7 in the United Kingdom, 29.3 in the United States of America, 38.1 in Germany, 31.2 in France, and 26.9 in Canada. As a consequence of such a maladjustment in the agricultural and industrial occupations of India, the proportion in annual income as between agriculture and industry has been very poor. The incomes *per capita* between agriculture and industries in India are approximately Rs. 59 and Rs. 12 respectively, whereas in Japan the figures are Rs. 57 and Rs. 158; in Sweden, Rs. 129 and Rs. 384; in the United Kingdom, Rs. 62 and Rs. 412; in Canada, Rs. 213 and Rs. 470; and in the United States of America, Rs. 175 and Rs. 721 respectively. The number of persons engaged in organized industries in British India was about 1.5 million in 1930, or roughly 1 per cent. of the total working population, while for the whole of India it was 1.7 million. The proportion of the working population engaged in all classes of industries including mining in India in the same year was 10.2 per cent., while in the United Kingdom it was about 47.2 per cent., in the United States of America 32, in Canada 25, in Germany 41.3, in France 33.8, and in Japan 19.5.

The figures stated above are sufficient to show to what extent India is industrially backward and how hopelessly the balance between the agricultural and industrial activities in India has been maladjusted.

Within recent years all the nations of the world have more or less concentrated their resources on the development of industries and manufactures with a view to strengthening their economic position on a solid basis. Following the example of Great Britain, the Continental nations, the United States of America, Canada, and Japan have made considerable progress in building up industries and thereby have increased their national wealth and income. Thus, economic nationalism has been the order of the day. But unfortunately, India has not been able to make any advance in the development of her industries and manufactures even up till now. So, it is no wonder that the middle classes of India have already come to the stage of complete ruin and the labourers to the nadir of poverty and degradation, and that the average earning power of the Indian has been the lowest of all among the nations having an ordered government.

## II

Industrialism cannot thrive unless the State encourages both corporate and individual enterprises. Not to speak of dependent countries, even independent countries cannot make any progress in industries and manufactures unless there be strong national policies to support them. Mr. J. Taylor Peddie, a noted writer on Economics observes in his book *Economic Reconstruction*: "The successful development of a nation wholly depends upon the favourable conditions which Government may create within it for productive industry; wherein men can use their minds, body,

health and intelligence with every freedom, each individual rising to his maximum power in the accomplishment of which he will derive his greatest happiness." It is unfortunate that neither the State nor the captains of industry have so long concentrated their resources upon the industrial development of India.

"It is a tragic waste of human effort", observes Sir S. Radhakrishnan in his famous Convocation Address to the Andhra University in 1927, "in a country where so much needs to be done. Earth and its resources are bountiful and there are plenty of hands capable of producing wealth and yet they are all lying idle. It is not fair to contend that Indians are unwilling to apply themselves to industrial pursuits as they are more speculative than practical. There does not seem to be anything radically wrong about the Indian mind. Till the industrial revolution, the conditions were practically the same in India and Europe. Our agricultural methods, economic institutions, industrial developments and the relations between the landlords and the tenants were governed on almost the same lines in India as in Europe. Only we happen to remain still in large part in the mediaeval agrarian and pre-industrial stages. It is a matter for deep concern that Great Britain has done little to stimulate us into life and activity in spite of our long and close political and economic association with it. One would expect that this connection with Britain would have given us a start in the race and enabled us to outstrip our competitors in the East. But nothing like it has happened." Some eminent British writers too express their views on the subject and they have been quoted by Sir M. Visvesvaraya in his book entitled *Planned Economy for India* to show an unbiased criticism of

the industrial situation in India. One of them is from a book entitled *Industry and the State—A Conservative View*, written by Four M. P.'s of Great Britain and published in 1927 :

"Few people nowadays seriously suggest that the State should conduct the industry of the nation. But it is the duty of any Government to create and to sustain conditions under which it is possible for other people to conduct them. . . . Captains of industry must look at the industrial activity of the country primarily from the viewpoint of their own undertakings. The Government alone is in a position to survey the whole field of industry impartially, to judge each industry not only from the economic standpoint but from the point of view of its national utility, to apply remedial measures to the black spots in the national interest, and, above all, to safeguard the interests of the consumer as well as those of the producer." There is another from the remarks of Sir Alfred Watson, a former editor of *The Statesman*, who while speaking in 1933 at a Royal Empire Society luncheon said : "Industrially India was a land of missed opportunities, the blame for it resting heavily on Britain. The mischief had been that Britain did not seriously tackle the problem of developing India's industrial potentialities." It is therefore obvious that India could not make any headway in the development of her industries on account of the lack of identity of interests between her people and her rulers. The only hope of India's industrial development lies in a radical change in the economic policies of the country after a close and thorough survey of the existing conditions. Some economists suggest that there should be an All-India Industrial Organization in which there must be two agencies, one from the Government and the other from

the public; the two need to work together in close co-operation to safeguard the industrial interests of the country. Let us hope that such an idea would be realized in action in the near future for the economic well-being of the people and that of the State as well.

### III

The temperament of the Indian people has often been condemned and referred to as one of the main reasons for India's industrial backwardness. The fault lies not so much in the mind of the people as in the want of opportunities and facilities to develop their spirit of enterprise and business integrity. If proper training had been provided for them from the very beginning of English education in India, they could have proved themselves as efficient as the advanced nations of the world.

It is also a mistake to suppose that the doctrine of Karma so inveterate in the mass consciousness is responsible for the Indians' lack of business enterprise. The doctrine of Karma never encourages inertia and timidity, nor is it a philosophy of despair, an ethics to make man idle and feeble. It is just the opposite of what its critics say and what its false adherents practise. It is for want of proper understanding that the doctrine has been confused with fatalism and its allied tendencies. The doctrine rather encourages a man to build his fate not only in the affairs of the world but also in the domain of the spirit. For, it proclaims the inner strength of man to triumph over the forces that try to enslave him. It never implies the denial of man's freedom to rule his circumstances, rather it emphatically denounces man's thinking of himself as a tool in the hands of Nature. The *Gita* sings the heroic note : "A man should uplift himself by his own

self, so let him not weaken this self. For this self is the friend of oneself, and this self is the enemy of oneself." The doctrine of Karma clearly indicates that man is not a mere bundle of instincts but a spirit that can govern the law of human action and stem the tide of cause and effect in any way he chooses. It is not the philosophy of the doctrine itself, rather its misinterpretation and misapplication that have retarded the economic and other progress of the country.

The emphasis on spiritual endeavour as stressed in the literature and the scriptures of India has not unoften been alleged to be a drawback in Indian character, that has proved to be a bar to the material progress of the country. This is also an instance of how the philosophy of life has been wrongly understood by critics and fatally applied by its false adherents. A spiritual life is not necessarily one of poverty and degradation in the material aspect. A spiritual civilization does not necessarily presuppose a nation's utter indifference to or neglect of material advancement. The Indian philosophy of life as promulgated by the Indian sages recognized the production of wealth as a legitimate aim of human endeavour. It was regarded as one of the fourfold attainments of life. The present state of poverty and ill-health is no index for the spiritual civilization of India, rather it seems to be just the very antithesis of the same when we remember the condition of ancient India whose wealth was proverbial and whose spiritual note of the national life was at the same time predominant. Therefore, those who at the present time justify the crass poverty of the Indian people on the ground of the spiritual inheritance of the nation are ignorant of Indian culture, its true perspective and development through ages and its

special message to the world. Swami Vivekananda again and again asked the Indians to improve the material condition of India, because even spirituality can hardly grow in the midst of poverty which is not voluntary. The sages of India never meant to make India a nation of Sannyasins; that is why they used to uphold the doctrine of Adhikâra which urges a man to take up the course of life best suited to his inclinations and aptitude. What they meant by the spiritualization of life can be well expressed in the memorable words of Swami Vivekananda: "This is the one mistake made in every country and in every society, and it is a greatly regrettable thing that in India, where it was always understood, the same mistake of forcing the highest truths on to people who are not ready for them, has been made of late. My method need not be yours. The Sannyâsin, as you all know, is the ideal of the Hindu's life, and every one by our Shastras is compelled to give up. Every Hindu who has tasted the fruits of this world must give up in the latter part of his life, and he who does not is not a Hindu, and has no more right to call himself a Hindu. We know that this is the ideal—to give up after seeing and experiencing the vanity of things. Having found out that the heart of the material world is a mere hollow, containing only ashes, give it up and go back. The mind is circling forward, as it were, towards the senses, and that mind has to circle backwards; the *Pravritti* has to stop and the *Nivritti* has to begin. That is the ideal. But that ideal can only be realized after a certain amount of experience. We cannot teach the child the truth of renunciation; the child is a born optimist; his whole life is in his senses; his whole life is one mass of sense-enjoyment. So there are child-like men in every coun-

try, who require a certain amount of experience, of enjoyment to see through the vanity of it, and then renunciation will come to them. There has been ample provision made for them in our Books; but unfortunately, in later times, there is a tendency to bind every one down by the same laws as those by which the Sannyâsin is bound, and that is a great mistake. But for that a good deal of the poverty and the misery that you see in India need not have been. A poor man's life is hemmed in and bound down by tremendous spiritual and ethical laws for which he has no use. Hands off! Let the poor fellow enjoy himself a little, and then he will raise himself up and renunciation will come to him of itself. Perhaps in this line, we can be taught something by the Western people, but we must be very cautious in learning these things." Thus it is clear that the spiritual heritage of India is no bar to the material advancement of the Indian people, and industrialism is the only way by which India can remove her age-long poverty and the present crisis of unemployment and under-employment. Industrialism has no doubt a number of perils and baneful effects on the life and the culture of a nation. But the course open to India is to tone them down to her requirements and at the same time to raise the banner of her civilization above the troubled waters of the industrial life.

#### IV

India has not yet learnt the extensive use of machinery in developing her industries. The manual labour in production has to be minimized and tools

of the most modern type have to be adopted. Referring to the use of machinery Sir M. Visvesvaraya observes: "The neglect to use machinery till now has been extremely harmful to India. The attitude of the people of India towards this new development should, therefore, be to accept unhesitatingly the principle that machinery and tools of the most modern type should be used in production. Except in the case of the textile industry, the volume of production obtained from organized industries in this country, that is, industries which use machinery, is inappreciable. . . . Experience shows that although some one invention or other has thrown people out of work, scientific discoveries taken as a whole have provided work for millions. The policy in India in the immediate future should therefore be to utilize up-to-date tools, machinery and power to the fullest extent permitted by its resources."

Training in business life is the most important factor of all in improving the conditions of industrial development. The capacity and quality of the average citizen of India should improve, and that is possible only if the modern educational institutions of India seriously take up the task and make provisions for imparting practical training to young and old men in the use of modern tools and machinery in the various grades of their educational career. Mass education should be free and compulsory to reach the people at large, at the same time the common people should be trained in industries so that the inherent tendencies in them for trade and commerce may be awakened.

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## REMINISCENCES OF GIRISH CHUNDER GHOSE

By MRS. GRAY HALLOCK

. . . . Girish Chunder Ghose, who died in February 1912, was a Hindu disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, and an exponent of the Vedânta, a religion and philosophy as old as India, which he worked into his fascinating dramas. So far as I know, there are as yet no translations of his complete works, otherwise his name would, I think, be even better known than Tagore's.

In India, G. C., as he was affectionately called in Sri Ramakrishna's circle, is still remembered and revered as a saint and a genius. There is a G. C. Society and a park in Calcutta is named after him—for the charm of his personality is utterly unforgettable by those who knew him well. . . .

The great yellow river was alive with small craft almost half across its width. Ghats and white buildings gleamed between palm trees on the opposite shore against the deep blue of India's clear warm winter sky. It was a day of religious festival. In the grounds of the Math or Hindu Monastery, founded by Vivekananda, the scent of blossoming mango trees was almost overpowering. Marigolds in the grass were trodden underfoot (as we tread daisies) by the great crowd of *babus* who had come from Calcutta by river, and garlands of these flowers strung like beads by their heads, without stems or foliage, festooned the portraits of Ramakrishna the Master, and of Vivekananda the disciple here venerated, set out like shrines under a large *shamiana* or tent. The garden and field was so crowded with visitors that the mass of humanity even surged in and out of the monastery,

changing the usual peacefulness of this spot to the semblance of a fair.

The poor from surrounding villages, squatting in rows on the grass, were being fed by Vivekananda's Sannyasins (monks), their salmon-coloured robes or *chuddars* distinguishing them from the bare-headed, white-*dhoti*-clad, umbrella-carrying *babu* visitors. These were mostly Bengali gentlemen, but here and there were men from the South or from the Hills, whose sympathies had drawn them to this annual festival. Here and there, under awnings, were groups of religious singers known as Sankirtan parties. In another place an improvising musician with matted hair, ash-strewn, was dancing and reciting in a frenzy of devotion, or what he intended to appear as such. Elsewhere pictures of Hindu gods, goddesses, and saints, and pious books were for sale. Everywhere heat and dust and the raucous voices of chattering, gesticulating Bengalis.

In this environment, so utter a contrast to the quiet upper room with which I came to associate him, I first saw Girish Chunder Ghose. A friend conducted me through this chaos of sights and sounds. Among a group, a little distance away, stood an elderly man of commanding appearance and bearing. He had a Roman type of face, and was the very evident centre of attraction in this little group under the trees. There must have been some witty repartee that raised a laugh from the others. With a smile, throwing his silk *chuddar* or shawl toga-fashion across one shoulder, the Roman figure strode away from the others.



"Who is that?" I asked.

"That is Girish Chunder Ghose, poet, dramatist, disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. I brought you to this part of the grounds to show him to you, but you have picked him out yourself. Shall I introduce you?" asked my guide, an American doctor.

"I would prefer not to meet him in this noisy place. Can you not take me to see him some day at his own house?" For I knew that my escort was *persona grata* there.

"Perhaps it can be arranged. You are quite right, this is no time or place for any real talk."

The tall figure was lost in the press, but there remained an impression of a physique and dignity seldom seen in India, and of a face Roman rather than Hindu, with keen grey eyes, iron-grey hair, and extraordinarily large ears. I knew nothing about him at this time except that he was called "the Bengali Shakespeare", and that he was a Bhakta (mystic) devoted to his Master and his memory.

A few weeks later I was taken to see this Indian poet in his own setting. Girish had consented to receive me, and through the northern quarter of crowded Calcutta bazaars we turned from a narrow lane into a short blind alley. At the end of it there faced us a typical native house of the better sort. Beside the entrance was a stone seat, and the house had an upper floor with a row of long iron-barred, open windows. In this upper room several men were seated on the floor about Girish, who always occupied a position at one end, facing the long windows that looked down into the little alley a few feet below. He must have seen us coming and wished to do us a courtesy, for when we entered the courtyard, crossed it, and were ascending a little stone stair in the wall to the roof (whence that upper room was

reached), Girish stood before us, descending and saluting us in the beautiful Hindu way, with folded hands. It is the attitude familiar to us in the saints who stand beside Madonna and Child in the old masters. In India it is the usual greeting. With most persons it may have degenerated into a mere salute, but the meaning of this gesture is really a sanctification, for the word that accompanies it, or is understood by the action, means, "I worship the Divine in thee". Is there any more beautiful greeting imaginable? I returned G. C.'s greeting, and realized that it is rare in the East for a host and an old man to rise to receive a woman. We followed him up the stone stair and across the roof that gave a glimpse of fading pink on sky and river and palm trees to the north.

The upper room we entered was long and narrow, with windows on both its sides, looking into the courtyard of the house, and on to the little alley that led to the entrance of the house. At one end a door led to the roof we had traversed, another at the opposite end led to an inner chamber - G. C.'s bedroom. The floor of the larger room was covered with a drugget, and bolsters were strewn about for guests to lean against. Book-cases lined the walls. At G. C.'s elbow was a pile of magazines and papers. Near him stood a medicine-chest and some small brass bowls containing spices which were handed round among the visitors at intervals. A native punkah of matting hung across the ceiling, and a boy sat on the balcony overlooking the courtyard of the house, working the cord it swung by. There is something infinitely soothing and hypnotic in that slow, monotonous creaking; no electric fan can compare with it for soporific influence.

We found several Bengali gentlemen already with G. C., to whom my pre-

sence was something of a shock and embarrassment. I had just enough knowledge of oriental etiquette to leave my shoes at the door, and had sufficiently acquired the habit of sitting cross-legged and to let myself down more or less gracefully into that attitude. I had a sense of feeling at home with Girish at once. His smile was very winning, his English perfect, his voice capable of conveying many shades of feeling. It is twenty years and more since I last saw him, but the personality is sharp and clear to me as when I saw him often, reclining at one end of this upper room. Strength, physical, mental, and spiritual, was the keynote of the impression he made. The term "mild Hindu" did not in the least apply to him, for it conveys the effeminacy characteristic of most Hindu men. Yet Girish never used his powers destructively. Sentimentality, patriotic or artistic, held no appeal to him. No fool or knave could stand unrecognized in his presence. I never heard any political or disloyal talk there.

In this house G. C. lived with an older widowed sister and his son. His wife and daughter had passed away some years before. Girish had been more or less wild in his youth; his saintliness, which was of the robust order, dating only from the time he came in contact with Sri Ramakrishna and the latter's death. I met Girish at a moment when I was greatly disillusioned and needed to meet just such a soul to save me from turning my back on much that appealed to me in India, but was so obscured by surface rubbish.

India has many saints, *sai-disant*, but it has few *men*. And here was a man of whom in his closing years I could feel the manliness and strength, the sweetness and tolerance and devotion of spirit. If you heard rumours of a wild youth, it was merely, as you looked at

the fine old Roman face, to think how handsome he must have been. What a magnificent lover he must have been—fierce, delicate, poetic, tenderly masterful, as a woman would have the man of her choice; taking her and her love as his birthright; assertive, not deliberate, yet humble by the strength of his love; aggressive in affection yet not in ownership! My respect went out to this old man who had had something to renounce, whose very strength sent him first to the devil and then, with equal impetus, to God. My reverence went out to him at once, as to the saint I had been looking for in a land of saints. There is so much mawkish sweetness among religious devotees in India. All mystics stand in danger of sentimentality. But here was one who had genius and fire, who was not half dead nor atrophied, one who had renounced the world, the flesh, and the devil, knowing their charm, and yet lived actively and beneficently in the midst of life; who used his genius for his time and his people, yet knew that fame is a bubble and laid his work at the feet of his God. A saint, this, who meditated and had realized God—yet had time and compassion enough to help the small troubles of his world, who went to Calcutta slums with righteous indignation and medicines, who scolded and annihilated evil, but loved the sinner and gave spiritual, mental, and physical comfort in a brotherly way. A saint, this, with a love of God that does not crowd out God's children; his heart set on God yet his brain, its servant, inspired to write great dramas and poems.

At the end of each day Girish gave free access to friends who cared to talk with him, and firmly he guided the conversation to only such topics as were worth while. He was to me a living exponent of that saying of the mediaeval mystic, Meister Eckhart, that "what a man

takes in by contemplation, he must give out in love". He was that rare "mystic who can be practical". Those who sought him regarded him as a master of mysticism before they thought of him as a master of rhetoric, yet they came to him, also, for advice in matters frankly worldly. He led that busy life which can always find leisure.

I spent many hours in that room at sunset. He made me always welcome literally and metaphysically. I sat at his feet and came to regard him with the affection of a daughter. It is difficult to recall all the details of that first meeting, for the privilege became a habit, but never a commonplace. Girish had his moods, like all sensitive souls. Sometimes gay and playful, you might also find him silent, grave, almost tragically serious, full of the sense of "Mâyâ"—the impermanence of what seems so real. That first time I was at his house he was at his best. I could forget myself even with a number of *babus* furtively watching me. I saw only G. C., as he liked to be called because Vivekananda had so dubbed him. The others, beside Girish, were merely furniture till I could individualize them, and see how they venerated and tried to serve him. . . .

Girish never quenched frankness or spontaneity. This was a great boon to me at the time, for I was leading a life of tremendous isolation and self-repression. To go to him was freedom to be myself, say what I thought, without fear of criticism. I never felt I had better not express a thought or question. He dealt patiently and sympathetically with stupid questions, repressed and depressing moods, understanding and respecting the problem he knew I had to meet.

But G. C. could be angry. He did not suffer fools gladly. I have seen him berate a friend or a servant with flashing eye. I rejoiced in this positive-

ness, this definite expression. He could sympathize and tolerate, but not weakly compromise. He said his say—then at once restored that person to his favour. And that has always seemed to me the only anger that is ethical. State the grievance, hit from the shoulder if you must—then leave the other to deal with it as he will, but reinstate him at once. If he sulks, that is not your affair. You are as much his friend as before, and you are ready to be treated by the same heroic method of swift, honouring plain speech and expect the same rapid closing and forgetting of the incident.

A thing that struck me was an action that I afterwards found to be a habit with G. C. As the short twilight deepened into the blue tropical night a servant came to light a hanging lamp. No matter if he was talking at the moment, Girish would stop, raise folded hands to his forehead in a gesture of worship, and murmur a salutation to Ramakrishna. It was the same if a bell were rung somewhere. I came to know that he set himself the time of candle-light and the sound of a bell as sentinels for a momentary remembrance of God. Perhaps this was not original, but he was the only Hindu in whom I ever observed it. It greatly impressed me as a simple and genuine application of the teaching of his Master, that "worship is constant remembrance". And did not Christian Brother Lawrence teach the same?

I once complained to Girish that his friends, if I asked them a question about Hindu customs, mythology, or literature, always murmured the replies with heads bent down into their clothing without looking at me. "I find it impossible", I told him, "to carry on a conversation that way, yet I feel they know so much about things I want to learn here. Why are they so awkward about it?"

Girish laughed heartily. He had never been out of India, yet he seemed Western in his understanding of my objection to this foolish embarrassment and self-consciousness, so noticeable, then, when Hindu men met Western women in India.

"Yes, it is absurd, Little Sister ! But they are shy and not used to ladies who talk with men freely and at ease. And this is their idea of respect. You startle them by being interested in the things we talk about here : religion, philosophy, metaphysics. You must remember that a Hindu must not look in the face of any woman but his mother, wife, sister, or daughter. It would be considered rude for him to do so."

"With us," I replied, "it is considered rude and shiftily *not* to look at the person you are speaking to, and we are taught to answer clearly. *You* don't act so !"

The old man smiled. "Shall I tell you how to put them at their ease with you ? In India, if you can *establish* a relationship, it is accepted. Why don't you tell them you are their sister ?"

So at the next visit to Girish I addressed the five or six men present. I told them I had come a long way to see India, to learn all I could, that I wished they would help me by talking to me freely, as do men and women in the West, and that I hoped they would henceforth regard me as their sister, since our dear Girish himself so honoured me. There was an immediate transformation. Faces came out of *chuddars* and I saw their chins for the first time. After this, on arrival and departure, I even got smiles and little acts of courtesy, specially from G. C.'s secretary and a Hindu doctor who frequented the house much and was greatly devoted to Girish. The talk was now not only between Girish and them, or between Girish and myself ; it became general

and gradually they addressed me. The first time this happened, Girish gave me a delighted wink and chuckled. And once he told me that if I was learning anything from his friends, they also were certainly learning something through me of Western men and women. And the reader must remember that I write of the India of a quarter of a century ago. Yet how slowly do things of custom change in the immemorial East !

Reverence for others was one of G. C.'s characteristics ; I never saw him permit anyone to touch his feet, a salute common in India towards a spiritual giant. I recall how greatly his proud humility struck me, when, in his presence, I saw a very much lesser man complacently accept such homage from a member of G. C.'s group of companions, and this reverence for others showed itself in his courtesy and patience towards the most insignificant individual present. . . . Often a messenger would come to him for medicine (he was something of a homoeopathic doctor) for some poor sufferer in the bazaar. Then he would drop his brilliant talk, ignore his admiring circle, turn to his medicine-chest, and inquire about symptoms. Sometimes he would leave us and go to satisfy himself about the case, or send a reassuring message with the medicine. His diploma as a physician was his faith in regarding himself as merely an instrument in the hands of his Master for the relief of suffering. I have seen him take a medicine in his folded hands and offer it in worship and supplication for blessing before giving it to the sick one. And the faith of the patient in Girish was equally great. So he often made good cures.

For financial, mental, and domestic distress his sympathy was ever ready also.

His views as Vedântist empowered him to ignore caste rules. At one time

he was ill with asthma and acute indigestion, and became interested in my ideas of diet. I doubted if he would eat of anything not prepared by Brahmin hands, but I prepared and took him some simple dishes, and to my delight he ate them and with relish. But it was because he had accepted me. Anyone who sought Truth was his brother or sister, and therefore no *Mlechchha* (foreigner). How great in Girish was this un-Hindu sense of brotherhood can only be estimated by those who know from experience that the most broad-minded and Veda-quoting Hindu will keep up fences and reserves of caste between himself and a *Mlechchha*, even if that foreigner should dress, think, eat, and live according to orthodox Hindu custom.

Once G. C. came and ate a European lunch with me in my rooms at a Calcutta boarding-house. How it must have shocked his orthodox friends! I can see him now, as he appeared that day on my verandah, in a long white *dhoti*, a clean white linen coat, a silk *chuddar*, and a cane. A tall old man; spare but powerful of frame, he held himself with almost military bearing and a great easy dignity. At first he had some difficulty with the fork, but my Mahomedan "boy" stood behind his chair and whispered opportune directions in Bengali, and I am sure that had I had the bad manners to smile Girish would have entered into my amusement about his awkwardness at a mem-sahib's table. To that little visit I owe an excellent little snapshot of him.

A sense of humour was his; keen, delicate wit, and repartee. It was a delight to hear him tell a story. It brought out his dramatic instinct and his beautiful English; for he told me many legends and often illustrated some point in our conversation with a

mythological tale. He was a born actor.

Of his own inner life and mystical experiences, Girish could seldom be brought to speak. Much is conveyed in the beautiful metaphor in which he once replied to an inquiry as to his realization of God in meditation. "For three days I saw all this" (with a comprehensive sweep of his arm) "as the dress of the Mother." Most of Ramakrishna's disciples had learned from him to speak of God in His aspect of Mother as well as Father. And the universe, to G. C., had become the mere *Mâyâ*-garment expressing and yet hiding the immanence of God. Returning one day from Belur Math, the monastery up the Ganges founded by Vivekananda, and leaving the boat at Annapurnâ Ghât, I ascended the steps to the streets of Bagh Bazaar and met Girish on his way home from the riverside. After some talk he went to his house in the company of a mutual friend who afterwards told me that on his short walk Girish stopped with folded hands at every wayside shrine and there are many such in these busy native quarters. "I dare not omit it", he had said, in explanation of the delay, and in him this was no slavery to custom but the mystic's desire to think of God at every opportunity. He felt the privilege of worship must not be denied to the soul so easily distracted by the kaleidoscopic external life. His spiritual make-up seemed to me a happy combination (and one of which India has crying need) of the Bhakta and Karma paths—the mystic and the practical path of service. Of merely psychic matters, which he considered hindrances to, rather than indications of, spirituality, I never heard him speak. . . .

On my return to the West the letters from Girish were a help and an inspira-

tion. As they became rarer, I jotted down notes to help me preserve my memories of him and our talks. Just before these notes were brought up to the date of my leaving India came the news of his death. Afterwards they sent me an unfinished letter found in his rooms. The Hindu friend of G. C.'s circle, who found it and often helped the secretary, wrote to me as follows :

"Through his last illness the great soul, so far as I could glean, had only one theme—to meet the Beloved in His indwelling and everlasting glory, free from all relativity. His ideal being to have no desire of his own, giving himself up entirely to the will of God, he justified himself in having even this wish, by his impatience to realize Him apart from all form. His last audible words were these : 'Now that you have come, dispel all my illusions and let me go ! Let me go !' For the period that I had the privilege to sit at his feet, I cannot but feel eternally grateful. I feel how great would have been my ignorance without his enlightening and loving gifts from day to day. How now to fill the blank ? I could sit beside him and keep silence and listen for a hundred lifetimes, and not think it enough ! How then am I to

be resigned after this brief span of his helpful companionship ? Is it not worse than the loss of many fortunes ? But the comparison is stupid ; a legacy is a spoilt piece of paper when the fortune is lost, but the legacy which Girish *babu* has left on the pages of our minds will not fail to bring a harvest year after year. He has his well-earned rest. Of that abode we know little, but we do know that we are no less dear to him there than we were here.

"I enclose a letter he started to you. I hoped he might finish it by dictating to me, but he grew too weak." . . .

Any personal elements in this article have only been included as tribute to a great soul. I can present G. C. only in relation to myself, so hope to be forgiven frequent references to the writer. One who has travelled far is often questioned as to what was found most impressive. What most impressed me in India was Girish Chunder Ghose, the biggest soul I have met. It was he who taught me and helped me to realize that what happens to us matters little, but that our attitude towards what happens to us is of immense importance. . . .

## THE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF JOHN MILTON

BY DR. DEBENDRA CHANDRA DASGUPTA, M.A., ED.D. (CALIFORNIA)

One of the last strong supporters of the liberal humanistic movement in education was John Milton, famous English poet, scholar and educator. His life covered almost exactly the first three quarters of the seventeenth century, from 1608 to 1674, a period in which revolutionary ideas were in the air. Reaction against the idea of the

divine right of kings which characterized the sixteenth century was in full swing. The emphasis was upon the divine right of the people, and revolt was in progress against vested interests in both church and state. Milton joined in the revolt. In the struggle against the Stuart kings he threw his wholehearted support on the side of Cromwell

and maintained his devotion to the republican cause to the very moment of the restoration of the Stuart monarchy in 1660.

Moreover, Milton did not rest content with his attack on political monarchy but attacked ecclesiastical monarchy as well. He violently criticized the practices of the Anglican Church, especially the practice of giving priests large salaries from public lands granted to the church.

A third sphere in which Milton made his vigorous reforming spirit felt was the field of education. He criticized severely the practices of the formalized Renaissance schools, notably the practice of wasting years of valuable time in memorizing useless Latin and Greek. However, while opposed to certain practices in the schools, Milton was essentially in harmony with the prevailing ideal of education as being predominantly a training for culture and citizenship. In addition, it is to be noted that although he advocated the divine right of the people as against the divine right of kings, he could not think of the divine right of the individual in place of or in connection with the divine right of the people. He maintained the right of the people to rise against the monarchical government but did not go so far as to assert the right of the individual to break the bonds of social and economic distinctions and to destroy the social aristocracy of his day. He fully supported the existing social aristocracy. Hence as we shall see, his scheme of education was designed mainly for the upper classes of society.

Milton was essentially a literary genius and poet and an educator only incidentally and by force of circumstances. The vicissitudes of the civil wars in England drove him to open a private school in London where he

continued as a school master for a period of seven years. This experience caused his active mind to think much upon the basic principles of education and in 1644 at the request of his friend, Samuel Hartlib, he wrote his famous *Tractate on Education*. In this work he advocated shortening the road to learning and substituted a knowledge of things for a knowledge of words. However, he would get at things not through the use of the vernacular as Comenius advised but through Latin and Greek. Thus he became one of the advocates of studying the classic authors not merely for their style but mainly for their content. He still adhered to the humanistic ideal of education but attempted to gain from them a knowledge of the realities rather than the superficialities of linguistic exercise. For this tendency Milton has been classed by the writers of the history of education as a verbal or humanistic realist.

The *Tractate on Education* mentioned in the preceding paragraph and Milton's *Considerations Touching the Likeliest Means to Remove Hirelings Out of the Church* written in 1659 as a protest against the practices of the Established Church have furnished the materials for this paper. Both of these treatises may be found in volume three of *Prose Works of John Milton* edited by J. A. St. John in 1888.

Before turning specially to a consideration of Milton's theory of vocational education it may be well to note that in general Milton aimed to give the upper classes of society such a training in the humanities, natural sciences, and vocations as would prepare them to hold the places of leadership in church and state. He deemed character to be a necessary pre-requisite to the successful discharge of one's civic duties. No one according to his view

was fit for public service without character and virtue. "Others betake them to state affairs, with souls so unprincipled in virtue and true generous breeding, that flattery and court shifts and tyrannous aphorisms appear to them the highest points of wisdom; instilling their barren hearts with a conscientious slavery; if as I rather think, it be not feigned."<sup>1</sup> Character, Milton believed, could be developed by means of an encyclopædic education. At many points Milton's philosophy of education resembles that of Rabelais and Comenius.<sup>2</sup> Like both of these men Milton advocated an encyclopædic education for the members of the leisured class with a view to preparing them for leadership. He agreed with Comenius in desiring to impart vocational training through institutions. Certain points of difference, however, may be noted. Milton did not believe in emphasizing the vernacular and in universal elementary education as did Comenius. Neither did he subscribe to Comenius' theory of learning about things through the senses. Further Milton's programme of vocational education for gentlemen was general in character while that of Comenius was more specific. Milton differed from Rabelais principally in advocating the education of gentlemen in groups by means of an Academy rather than individually by means of the tutor.

In Milton's plan vocational education, like education in general, was to be limited mainly to the upper classes. His recommendations concerned two groups of people, namely, the gentry and the clergy. For the former he advocated trade, technical and profession-

al instruction as a preparation for public service. For the latter he recommended training in some trade in order that they might be prepared to earn their living. In both cases the ultimate purpose was the making of good citizens of the commonwealth. The gentry were to be enabled to discharge their civic duties better and the clergy were to be made better citizens in that they would be able to carry their own economic load and no longer be parasites.

The objectives of vocational education in the theory of Milton were four-fold, cultural, æsthetic, economic, and civic. The immediate objective was to facilitate the instruction of the humanities and the natural sciences but the ultimate objective was the building of character through humanism. "And this will give them such a real tincture of natural knowledge, as they shall never forget, but daily augment with delight. Then also those poets which are not counted most hard, will be both facile and pleasant, Orpheus, Hesiod, Theocritus, Aratus, Nicander, Oppian, Dionysius; and in Latin, Lucretius, Manilius, and the rural part of Virgil."<sup>3</sup> In addition to this cultural purpose Milton also aimed, especially in connection with agriculture, at developing such interest in and aptitudes for rural pursuits as could later be capitalized upon. He recommended such training in agriculture for example as would enable gentlemen to improve the "tillage of the country to recover the bad soil, and to remedy the waste that is made of good."<sup>4</sup>

It has already been noted that Milton proposed to develop character and virtue by means of an encyclopædic education. This education was to cover a period of nine years, that is, from

<sup>1</sup> J. A. St. John, *Prose Works of John Milton*, Vol. III, p. 466.

<sup>2</sup> See the writer's article on Rabelais, "An exponent of modernism in educational philosophy", published in *Prabuddha Bharata*, January, 1935.

<sup>3</sup> J. A. St. John, *Prose Works of John Milton*, Vol. III, p. 471.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 469.



about twelve to twenty-one years of age, and was to comprise humanistic studies, natural science and training in the various trade and technical occupations. An exhaustive curriculum in humanistic studies was suggested including Latin and Greek. Among the sciences were included such subjects as arithmetic, astronomy, anatomy, botany, geometry, geography, mineralogy, natural philosophy, physics, physiology, trigonometry, and zoology. Among the trade and technical subjects were included agriculture, architecture, pharmacy, engineering, fortification, fowling, fishery, gardening, hunting, medicine, marine-engineering, navigation, and sheep-tending.<sup>5</sup>

This programme was to extend over what we know today as the secondary and university periods of education. During the secondary period, that is from about twelve to eighteen years of age, vocational education was to occupy the dominant place. It was, however, to be an integral part of the general humanistic training prescribed for the gentry, to be given under the same room and to be purely informative in character. At the age of eighteen the young gentlemen were to proceed to the university where the humanistic studies would be dominant. However, vocational education of a professional nature would be given also, for example, training in politics, law, theology, and oratory. And last of all at the age of about twenty-one years, the organic arts such as logic, rhetoric, and poetry would be taken up. "The next removal must be to the study of politics; to know the beginning, end, and reasons of political societies; that they may not, in a dangerous fit of the commonwealth, be such poor, shaken, uncertain reeds, of such a tottering

conscience, as many of our great counsellors have lately shown themselves, but steadfast pillars of the state. After this, they are to dive into the grounds of law, and legal justice; delivered first and with best warrant by Moses; and as far as human prudence can be trusted, in these extolled remains of Grecian lawgivers, Lycurgus, Solon, Galeneus, Charondas, and thence to all the Roman edicts and tables with their Justinian and so down to the Saxon and common laws of England, and statutes. Sundays also and every evening may be now understandingly spent in the highest matters of theology, and church history, ancient and modern; and ere this time the Hebrew tongue at a set hour might have been gained, that the Scriptures may be now read in their own original; whereto it would be no impossibility to add the Chaldee and the Syrian dialects. When all these employments are well conquered, then will the choice histories, heroic poems, and Attic tragedies of state of statelike and most regal argument, with all the famous political orations, offer themselves; which if they were not only read, but some of them got by memory, and solemnly pronounced with right accent and grace, as might be taught, would endue them even with the spirit and vigour of Demosthenes or Cicero, Euripides or Sophocles.

"And now, lastly, will be the time to read with them those organic arts, which enable men to discourse and write perspicuously, elegantly, and according to the fittest style, of lofty, mean, or lowly. Logic, . . . be taught out of the rule of Plato, Aristotle, Phalereus, Cicero, Hermogenes, Longinus. To which poetry would be made subsequent, or indeed rather precedent, as being less subtle and fine, but more simple, sensuous, and passionate. . .

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 468-471.

These are the studies wherein our noble and our gentle youth ought to bestow their time, in a disciplinary way, from twelve to one and twenty: unless they rely more upon their ancestors dead, than upon themselves living."<sup>6</sup> And through all of these studies the underlying purpose was the development of character and virtue. "But here the main skill and groundwork will be, to temper them such lectures and explanations, upon every opportunity, as may lead and draw them in willing obedience inflamed with the study of learning and the admiration of virtue; stirred up with high hopes of living to be brave men, and worthy patriots, dear to God, and famous to all ages."<sup>7</sup>

In suggesting the method to be used in giving vocational training, especially in the secondary period, Milton, like Rabelais, emphasized practical experience with an occupational environment supplemented by reference to ancient authors. "The next step would be to the authors of agriculture, Cato, Varro, and Columella, for the matter is most easy; and, if the language be difficult, so much the better, it is not a difficulty above their years. And here will be an occasion of inciting, and enabling them hereafter to improve the tillage of their country, to recover the bad soil, and to remedy the waste that is made of good."<sup>8</sup>

In order to provide the necessary occupational experience Milton advocated the practice of securing experienced and successful tradesmen who would help the pupils in trade classes either for remuneration or out of sympathy. "They may procure the helpful experience of hunters, fowlers, fishermen, shepherds, gardeners, apothecaries; and

in the other sciences, architects, engineers, and mariners, anatomists, who doubtless would be ready, some for reward, and some to favour such a helpful seminary."<sup>9</sup> Here is a clear recognition of the value of occupational experience as a necessary qualification for the teacher of vocational education, a matter which is being emphasized greatly in the trade training programmes of today.

Practically all of the matters so far discussed have related to the vocational training to be given to the gentry. Only a word need be added at this point concerning the vocational training recommended for the clergy. It will be recalled that Milton vehemently opposed allowing the priests of the Established Church to continue living in ease and luxury at public expense. He recommended that the large stipends allowed to the priests from grants of land to the church be stopped. In place of this means of support he suggested that each priest should receive enough vocational training in a part-time school to enable him to support himself independently of all church allowances. "But how they shall live when they are thus bred and dismissed will be still the sluggish objection. To which is answered, that those public foundations may be so instituted, as therein may be at once brought up to a competence of learning and to an honest trade; and the hours of teaching so ordered, as their study may be no hindrance to their labour or other calling."<sup>10</sup>

The discussion in this article had made it clear that Milton's theory of vocational education was concerned chiefly with the training of gentlemen and priests. The programme of study for a gentleman included in addition to humanistic studies trade, technical and

<sup>6</sup> J. A. St. John, *Prose Works of John Milton*, Vol. III, p. 472.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 468.

<sup>8</sup> J. A. St. John, *Prose Works of John Milton*, Vol. III, p. 469.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 471.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

professional courses. The trade and technical courses were to form a part of the curricula of the secondary schools while the professional studies were to be reserved to the universities. However, Milton never advocated specific vocational training either trade, technical, or professional, but rather like Rabelais desired to give gentlemen a broad training in the humanities, natural sciences, and vocations. This was to be accomplished through first-hand contact with the various occupations in classes conducted by experienced men and through a study of the ancient authorities in the various fields. The purpose of this training was not to produce men skilled in any one occupation but to prepare men of character versed in all cultural knowledge and acquainted with all occupations to be

leaders in public service. The interest of the individual was subordinated to the interest of the state. Although the economic aim found little place in the vocational education of gentlemen it did operate in the vocational training recommended for the priests of the church.

While Milton's theory of vocational education is much the same as that of Rabelais, nevertheless he did make two important contributions namely, (1) advocating the use of experienced and successful men in the various trades and professions as an aid in giving vocational education, and (2) advocating the establishment of part-time schools of less than college grade as a means of imparting vocational education. Both of these practices are in vogue in modern programmes of vocational education.

## WHAT IS DUTY ?

BY SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

What is duty and how far does it go—is a question that is often asked.

Some great soul has said : "Duty is the penalty we have to pay for our attachment." At first sight, this may seem a very curious and unsatisfactory definition, but it must be understood from a certain higher standpoint. The Buddhas, Christs, Ramakrishnas, etc. have no duty at all. Theirs is only loving service, but not duty. There is no constraint in their activities. Neither is there any wish for gain or for the fruits of their work. The Perfect Man has no duty and no attachment. There is nothing he has to perform as a duty. His is only loving service done in perfect freedom without any sense of constraint or thought of "I" and "mine".

Duty does not consist in attachment or clinging to this little world of our ego, to our body-consciousness, to our mind, etc., and I am not prepared to call any work done through attachment or for the satisfaction of some desire, whatever its nature may be, duty or to give it the place of duty. Such work is attachment and caused by attachment and clinging to our little personalities, but never the fruit of a higher sense of duty and freedom.

Duty consists in the control of the senses, in selflessness, loving service, in the right purification and concentration of the mind and in giving all our faculties a higher turn, making them fit instruments for the Divine. The purer we become, the better we can do our work as a form of loving service to the

Divine in all, but we should see that there is no attachment in it. Attachment should never be given the name of duty, whatever else it may be. Most people perform their so-called duty out of clinging to sensual pleasures in a gross or subtle form, out of attachment to persons or things, but this is not duty. Here we should learn to discriminate very clearly between what is really deep-rooted egoism in some form or other and what is duty in the true sense of the term.

So long as we are not prepared to renounce our inordinate clinging to our little self and its petty desires, our inordinate hankering after all sorts of sense-pleasures and possessions, we can never take the higher standpoint, and so we cannot understand the meaning of the definition, "Duty is the penalty we have to pay for our attachment." Really speaking, duty is that which helps our progress. This should be taken as a general rule for everybody. And we have got duties of various kinds duty to ourselves, duty to others, duty to the Divine. All these should be made to tally.

Very often we think we have got a certain duty to perform, but we find that it is beyond our grasp. It is too high for us. What to do in such a case? Take the help of a working duty and make that a stepping stone on your way to the goal. There is no such thing as a fixed standard for duty. Duty changes continually in the course of our evolution. The child's duty is not that of the youth. The youth's duty is not that of old age. The householder's duty is not that of the monk. So each case has to be judged differently.

Very often our sense of duty is found to be in conflict with our sense of the pleasant, but we should learn to make our sense of duty coincide with our sense of the pleasant, our "ought" coin-

cide with what we should like to do, and thus avoid the great amount of unnecessary friction and worry which means a huge waste of energy.

There are always two currents in our mind, an upper-current and an under-current, and this under-current can be made to flow along a certain channel even while the upper-current is busy with the performance of some work. Through steady spiritual practice we are able to have a larger bit of our mind under control, and the more we can do this, the more effectively we can divide our mind into two, practising the presence of the Divine and doing the work we have to do at the same time. This is a very important point in the life of the Sâdhaka.

If there is any real, sincere and deep-rooted hankering after the higher life, you will always find the necessary time for your practices and studies. And if you do not do so in spite of feeling a real yearning, you will end by being completely upset. When the soul has come to have a little awakening, it must be given food under all circumstances. Otherwise there comes a serious cleavage in the personality, a great disturbance and restlessness, a tremendous dissatisfaction and loss of balance. In such a case you can never feel at ease so long as you go on starving your soul.

Some day we may have to go through our practices a little hurriedly, some other day at greater leisure and with greater attention, but if we do not go through them at all, this thought will be pricking us constantly for the rest of the day, creating a whirlpool in our mind. Whether hurriedly or leisurely, the spiritual practices have to be done day by day with great steadiness, singleness of purpose and regularity.

Saying that there is absolutely no time for one's spiritual practices and readings is not the truth. If I find time to sleep

for six hours, I can just go and sleep, let us say, ten minutes less and take some five minutes from my meals, some five minutes from something else etc., etc. Thus I come to have at least half an hour for my spiritual practices and readings. And this is what is to be done under all circumstances, even if my mind is disturbed, even if I am not able to do it with great attention, even if I go through my practices somewhat mechanically, even if my whole brain revolts at the mere idea of study or deep thinking. And this too is duty. For by serving myself first with a view to serve others, I can serve them with far greater efficiency and in a better spirit. If we are able to work for others in the right spirit without any personal gain, it helps us in doing our meditation in a better way. If we are able to do our meditation in a better way, that again helps us in working for others in a better spirit of consecration and self-surrender to the Divine.

There are some people who go on with their Japa even while they are engaged in some work. Mind has got wonderful capacities if we only know how to control, purify and develop it along right lines. One may very well do one's work in a perfectly resigned way, surrendering oneself wholly and unconditionally to the Divine. Then there comes a time when all work becomes worship. And work again becomes worship when we are in that prayerful mood of self-surrender. It is possible to combine both, activity and self-surrender, doing what we have got to do in perfect self-forgetfulness.

In the lives of most people you find it is all aimless activity that has no ideal, no higher goal, no clear conception of anything. It is nothing but drifting in a sea of vague and nebulous ideas and desires. What such people

generally go on calling duty, is really speaking nothing else than attachment. Most people keep themselves busy and active through attachment and yearning for sense-enjoyment. It is always easy to be active when following the line of attachment and clinging to wrong values. And very often through attachment, through covetousness in some form or other, we call a thing our duty. But it is not duty at all. It is all attachment and craving for sense-enjoyment, though I give it a high-sounding name and feel satisfied. Duty as such should have no element of attachment or egoism in it, whether individual or collective. I should work in a spirit of perfect self-sacrifice to the Divine, through a sense of "ought", never for some personal end.

We have three kinds of work :— 1. Work as attachment; 2. Work as duty; 3. Work as loving service. And whatever work is found to be incompatible with the Divine idea, is to be dropped mercilessly.

Ordinarily, people work as slaves to their senses and personal desires, gross and subtle. But the Great Ones work out of their own immeasurable freedom, neither from a sense of attachment, nor from a sense of duty as generally understood. They do all their acts as a form of loving service to the Divine in all, knowing and fully realizing themselves to be instruments, not agents.

Our activity should have a goal that is beyond the realm of our petty desires, and this goal must be realized. Our activity should never be aimless activity, activity for the sake of activity. There are many people who pride themselves on being "active", but that simply means they cannot sit still, they must always "do" something, being afraid of being left to themselves and to their own thoughts. Theirs is the random activity of the monkey, that is

intensely active, no doubt, but what for nobody knows. This is nothing to feel proud of. Such people always do something or see something or hear something on the physical plane, and if they are prevented from doing this, they feel miserable. They are no longer able to live on the thought-plane. Most people work only through attachment and clinging to their body, for what Sri Ramakrishna used to call "Kâma-Kâncana". If there comes a sense of real duty in a person, that is already something better, but even that is still a sort of constraint. There is still something higher and better than that: Loving service to the Divine in all in perfect self-surrender.

The higher ideal, of course, always brings in its wake a certain amount of limitation. I can no longer freely and thoughtlessly go in for all kinds of so-called duties, all kinds of activities, the moment I have the higher ideal in view. I cannot steal. I cannot tell any lies. I cannot do anything immoral. I cannot lead a sexually impure life. I cannot act in an undignified, vulgar way. At least, the really sincere and scrupulous person cannot. The unscrupulous person can do all that and much more. So, here again, the scrupulous person is more limited than the unscrupulous one, but this kind of limitation belongs to a higher order. If we sincerely bring in the higher ideal, we find that certain activities and certain so-called duties do not tally with it. And all these have to be thrown overboard. There is no other way.

When we make some compromise, we should say and know that we are weak, but we should never make this a justification for our weakness or even go so far as to call it a duty. And if any compromise is made, it should only be made with a view to

rise above all compromise some day. There should be no attempt at justification. The ideal should never be lowered.

There is another thing that should be considered as our duty. A little of the student's life has to be continued even after our school-days. If there comes any break in our studies and serious readings, it is very bad for the development of our mind and thinking faculty. Many people lose their thinking habit when they leave school or grow older. And this is very bad indeed. There is nothing so dangerous as loose, hazy thinking. Having lost their thinking habit, they become men of action only and not men of thought. Both should be combined and harmonized, otherwise the effects will be very bad. For most people it becomes impossible to take up their studies again after there has been a break, and the very few, who succeed in doing so, must pass through a period of terrible strain and struggle, because the thinking habit has been lost. Their light superficial readings, their light talks, their thoughtless outward activities without reflectiveness have spoilt their thinking faculty to a great extent. If you open your eyes, you see the effect in our present-day world; thoughtless, hectic activity without any higher ideal or deeper understanding of truth and the higher laws; activity for activity's sake which is not much better than idleness for the sake of idleness, however much people may pride themselves on that kind of active life. It is not enough that I go on creating something. What I create must be something good, constructive, not destructive or tending to lower humanity.

So even if we do not find time to read much, we should at least think intensely day by day. So much time

is continually being wasted in thinking useless and even harmful thoughts, which might be made use of for thinking along higher, constructive lines. There are so many dull moments in the course of the day, and these dull moments can very well be used for higher thinking. Instead of thinking useless thoughts, let us make use of that time for something higher. Instead of sitting in some corner and being dull, we can make use of such moments by thinking of something higher and truer. If we really do this, we shall find that there is plenty of time for our practices, our studies, our intelligent thinking. Our thoughts should never be allowed to drift aimlessly.

Very often we go and sit down in a more or less thoughtless manner for half an hour or so, or read some light stuff or listen to something light and worthless. All this we do more or less like idiots. We even find it pleasant. But the moment this half-hour is to be used for readings or serious studies, for something profitable and healthy, our whole brain revolts and resists.

One can ponder profitably over the well-known saying of the Buddha, "Come now, brethren, I do remind ye: 'Subject to decay are all compounded things.' 'Do ye abide in heedfulness.'" This thought helps us very greatly in avoiding useless occupations and random thinking by making us realize the evanescence of the phenomenon. We should make it a point to stress the Unchanging Principle in our life and not that which is continually changing and transforming itself in countless ways. And the highest duty of man is to realize that principle here, in this very life, and then to help others in realizing it.

If we consciously utilize the time that is being lost in idle talks, in use-

less occupations and thoughts, we should find more time than we need. Through practice we can develop such intensive thinking that two hours' ordinary thinking may be done in half an hour. There are two things : quantity and quality.

There are also people who cultivate an indifferent mood, but their indifference is not the serene calmness of the Perfect Man but more akin to dullness and lethargy than to anything else. They are more dead than alive. A Tamasic state should never be taken for Sattva. Stocks and stones are not great Yogis.

It is better and advisable for everybody not only to find time for his prayers, Japa and meditation, but also to have some regular studies, some readings of selected passages from the *Upanishads*, for at least ten minutes after his spiritual practices. Inertia and dullness are the great enemies of spiritual life in all its phases. And there are many people who develop physical and mental inertia which is very very dangerous. The moment we allow this mood of inertia to possess us, we do not find any time, neither for our practices nor for our readings and studies. In such a mood we do not see the time, though the time may be there. We become too dull to be aware of it.

Sense-control helps us in thinking intensely and in living intensely and purposefully. Why always go and depend on the sense-world? When the senses are controlled, one can easily remain on the thought-plane. Why go and depend on kicks and blows from the outside world? When distractions are removed, we should be able to lead a more intensive and conscious life, trying to remain as wide awake as possible under all circumstances. But very often we find that people become

more and more dull and inert like stocks and stones, finding less and less time for their studies and spiritual practices as soon as the goad of outward distractions and out and out worldly pursuits have been removed.

There are three kinds of activity :

1. Activity without any definite thought; 2. Activity with some definite thought; 3. The activity of a higher form of consciousness along with ordinary consciousness. And we should never stop short of that. Here no new capacity is created, but the old one is given a new and better turn. Nothing new is brought in from outside.

What we have got to do in meditation is to try to make the upper-current and the under-current one. And then, during work, the under-current should be made to flow along some higher channel, along some higher constructive lines, as much as possible. We must modify the contents of the lower current. We must bring them to the conscious plane. When we do this, we get a good portion of our mind at our command and, at the same time, we come to have a more intense and wide-awake mind.

Spiritual life means more and more of mental awakening, i.e., the awakening of the higher mind ultimately leading to the attainment of superconsciousness.

Just study your mind and its movements dispassionately while doing your work. Watch it and see how it is busying itself with all sorts of useless and sometimes even harmful things. We can have conscious control over our mind, at least to a great extent, and through steady and prolonged practice you will find that the brain-fibres as it were, become lighter and lighter, losing much of their resistance. Both physical and psychical obstructions are to be counteracted as much as

possible to clear the way to the goal : Superconsciousness.

In the *Upanishads* we find a passage that says,—“The Highest Truth cannot be realized ordinarily. It can be realized only by the Subtle Seers by means of the subtle intellect.”

The subtle intellect always means purified intellect, and this purification is very very essential in the life of the *Sâdhaka*.

First, the dreamer must be awake and then he must become fully conscious. The unconscious must be conscious and then have more and more of superconsciousness. So here too, along with our work, with all our activities, along with the performance of duty, the under-current is to be kept up at all times. We must learn to divide our mind into two and then keep one part busy with the higher thoughts. This is the only practical solution and it can be done through steady practice.

The question of duty is a very difficult one. So in the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* it is said that even the wise are confused as to what is duty and what is non-duty.

As defined earlier, duty is that which helps us in our progress; non-duty, that which prevents or retards our progress; just as we can say : Good is that which helps our evolution; evil is that which retards or prevents our evolution. But all these are only very loose and general definitions. Each case should be judged by itself. And always the lesser thing has to be sacrificed for the sake of the higher, and by doing this we rise step by step to higher and higher forms of duty till we reach the goal when all duty drops off and what is left is only loving service to the Divine in all in a spirit of perfect self-surrender and self-forgetfulness. And this is the ideal all the Great Ones stand for.



# SOCIAL SERVICE IN GERMAN WINTER RELIEF

BY PROFESSOR BENOY KUMAR SARKAR

## WINTER RELIEF IN THE MORPHOLOGY OF ECONOMIC PLANNING

The German philosopher Fichte, the father of the "youth movement", taught mankind a great lesson when in the early years of the nineteenth century he declared that "even the most down-trodden slave is the temple of the Holy Ghost". In recent times another great world-teacher, our own Vivekananda, has proclaimed the divinity of the poor in his cult of *Daridra-Narayana* (The Poor as the God in human form). The moral and spiritual foundations of service to the slave and the poor are therefore as prominent in Indian ideology as in German. The ideology of social service can really be traced as far back as early mankind,—say, among the Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Mussalmans, and Christians.

The ideal or the sentiment of social service is indeed universal. But the manner or form in which this service is rendered has not been uniform through the ages. The very definition or content of social service has changed from time to time and has always been in need of analysis, clarification, and precision.

Let us take the simple modern category, relief of unemployment or service to the unemployed. Everybody on earth should seem to understand it quite well. And yet in Eur-America and Japan, or for that matter, in international statistics today not any and every jobless man or woman can be described as unemployed. The unemployed is known to be a person who used to have a job but who lost it

because of circumstances beyond his control. In other words, unemployment is a technical term, a scientific category. The more generic term, poverty, also requires definition as regards earnings, standard of living, nutritional minimum, price-level, number of persons to be maintained and so forth. The relief of unemployment or of poverty is likewise a term that cannot be used glibly. One has to define it. A very common expression is "social work" or social service. This technical term like all others requires definition just as poverty itself does.

We know in India that not any and every condition of want, penury or distress may be described as famine or even scarcity. Today in Bengal, for instance, according to the provisions of the Indian Famine Code, there is "scarcity" of food in certain areas. Relief is being enjoyed by people at the cost of the Government without being compelled to do any work. Even when the relief is administered by the District Board the Government is responsible for the entire expenses of this gratuitous relief. But in case this gratuitous relief has to be distributed continuously for two months, the area will be technically described as subject to "famine". Then there is another condition. The number of persons getting this charity for two months must have to be  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of the population in that jurisdiction, i.e. 5 per 1,000, in order that it may be formally declared as a famine area.

Morphologically speaking, social work, social service, relief operations, campaign against poverty, poverty con-

trol, etc. are multiform. There are forms and forms of social service and poverty relief. A very interesting form is the social service as embodied in the *Winterhilfe* (winter relief) of Germany. In the morphology of "economic planning" German winter-relief ought to occupy a very substantial place.

The Germans are spending nearly thirty seven crores of Rupees (370 million Reichsmarks) every year on the "special relief" of distress, poverty, and misery during the six winter months (October-March). This is nearly one-third of the "total disbursements" of the Central Government of India. Coming nearer home, we may visualize the situation effectively when we observe that, financially, the German winter relief is to be appraised as over three times the average annual expenditure of the Bengal Government (nearly twelve crores). For a population of 65 millions this "special winter relief" alone implies nearly Rs. 2-12-0 per head per year. This is somewhat more than what is spent on "all and sundry" heads by the Bengal Government for a population of 51 millions. We must remember, besides, that in addition to "winter relief" there are the other measures of social service in Germany on which vast sums are spent for instance, through "social insurance" organization, "poor relief" and so forth.

#### FORMS OF POVERTY—RELIEF OLD AND NEW

Germany is one of the richest countries of the world like the U.S.A., the United Kingdom and France. And yet Germans have to spend so lavishly on poverty-relief, corresponding to a certain extent, as it does, to famine relief in India. The mystery or the paradox was discussed and explained in my paper on the "Theory of Wages in the

Light of Social Insurance and Public Finance" presented to the nineteenth Indian Economic Conference held at Dacca (January 1936). There it was pointed out that "fair wages" are hardly to be encountered in the economic systems of the world. Every employee or working man is normally incapable of attending to his sickness, accident, invalidity, old age, and unemployment on the strength of the legal remuneration for his service. In other words, even under conditions of employment "relative" poverty is the prevailing condition of life. Under conditions of "crisis" leading to the discharge of hands as well as unemployment,—short, temporary, seasonal, long or chronic,—the normal character of poverty as a social phenomenon becomes all the more palpable.

The recent world-economic depression (1929-34) has shown that poverty is universal, almost as widely "distributed" as mankind. The richest countries of the world like the U.S.A., England, and Germany are not without their poverty problems. They may define their poverty in a way different from that of the people in the "Balkan complex", Russia, China, and India. But all the same, poverty continues to flourish in the lands of these regions of high national income *per capita* no less than in the regions traditionally known to be poor. Poverty indeed is eternal.

Equally eternal, i.e., virtually coeval with mankind is the campaign against poverty. The latest forms of poverty control or war upon poverty are to be found in the diverse branches of "social insurance" comprising as they do unemployment insurance. But the entire *corpus* of social insurance has failed to demolish poverty in its entirety.

The older forms of poverty relief are, therefore, still in vogue in all the

regions of "neo-capitalism" and the "second industrial revolution" such as are pioneering the new phases of civilization. The older relief-methods, namely, systems of "poor law", "poor rates" etc. have not yet been liquidated in England or Germany. Rather, they have been getting a fresh lease of life. Nay, the still older, the "primitive" methods of poverty-doctoring, namely, charity or philanthropy,—which may be indifferently described as Christian, Hindu or Moslem—are also being requisitioned in the advanced countries of the world. In Germany this is being attempted on a scale unprecedented in history whether in amount or in the thoroughness of organization. The *Winterhilfswerk* (Winter Relief) operations of the two years 1933-34 and 1934-35 belong to this system of old-world charity and have to be taken as measures in addition to the regular social insurance programmes.

India is a country that knows neither "social insurance" nor "poor rates". The famine relief work of this country does not belong to either system. We are as a rule used to poverty relief of the ancient types, namely, charity or philanthropy, and this, again, more unorganized than organized. The organized charity of the German people under state auspices that has taken shape in the *Winterhilfswerk* of the

Hitler regime cannot therefore fail to be of the most profound interest to countries like India as a remarkable instance of the resuscitation of the ancient methods under modern conditions. The Ramkrishna Mission and other social service institutions in India would find the Reports of winter relief in Germany from 1933 to 1935 to be exceedingly instructive and full of practical suggestions.

#### THE TWO YEARS 1933-35

In kind and cash as well as the goods value of the sums realized during 1934-35 the total amounted to RM. 367,425,485 as against RM. 358,136,041 during 1933-34. The number of persons relieved was 13,866,571 (16,617,681 in 1933-34). This constituted 21.1 per cent of the total population as against 25.3 per cent. of the previous year. Workers employed in relief operations were numbered at 1,338,333 (1,495,000). Most of them were voluntary, the paid assistants being 5,198 (4,116). The expenses made up only 0.93, i.e., less than 1 per cent of the total realized (0.95% in 1933-34).

The following table furnishes a comparative survey of the two years in regard to the main feature of this welfare work :

Item.	1933-34.	1934-35.
1. Relieved ... ..	16,617,681	13,866,571
2. Relieved in percentage of total population ... ..	25.3	21.1
3. Relief-Workers ... ..	1,495,000	1,338,333
4. Relief-Workers paid ... ..	4,116	5,198
5. Total realized in Cash and Kind ...	RM. 358,136,041	RM. 367,425,485
6. Expenses of the Relief operations ...	RM. 3,414,130	RM. 3,407,326
7. Relief in percentage of 6 i.e. total realized ... ..	0.95	0.93

For the purpose of this paper we shall take the Reichsmark as roughly equivalent to one Rupee.

#### CASH COLLECTIONS CENTRAL AND LOCAL

The collections were made through two organizations, the central (*Reichsfuehrung*) and the local (*Gaufuehrung*).

gen). During 1934-35 the foreign department of the Nazi Party realized from the Germans settled or sojourning abroad the sum of RM. 918,158. This is shown as realized by the Central Organization.

The main channels of collection are indicated in the following table :

Collectors				1933-34	1934-35
1. Central Organization	( <i>Reichsfuehrung</i> )	...	...	RM. 65,472,391	RM. 54,465,199
					(including RM. 918,158 collected by the Nazi organizations abroad).
2. District Organizations	( <i>Gaufuehrungen</i> )	...	...	RM. 118,799,917	RM. 150,344,325
3. Carried forward from previous year	...	...	...	...	RM. 8,135,209
4. Total	...	...	...	RM. 184,272,307	RM. 212,945,209

The central collections of 1934-35 in cash are itemized below :

1. Realizations from business houses	...	...	RM. 18,321,652
2. Gifts in the form of voluntary deductions from wages and salaries by the employees of the railways, post offices, army, navy, and private persons	...	..	11,088,358
3. Individual Contributions	...	..	1,546,372
4. Special measures in the form of voluntary reductions in post-cheque and bank accounts	...	..	5,508,895
5. Freight charges paid or unclaimed by the railways in regard to the transportation of coal for the relief	...	..	9,543,491
6. Special winter-relief lottery	...	..	7,538,272
7. Collections abroad	...	..	918,158
Total			RM. 54,465,199

The collections through the *Gau* or district organizations in cash were as follows :--

1. Monthly gifts from wages and salaries	...	...	RM. 77,739,076
2. Monthly one-pot meal ( <i>Eintopfgericht</i> )	...	..	29,581,379
3. Gifts from business houses, societies, and individuals	...	..	18,230,937
4. Subscriptions to the Central Organization	...	..	4,291,152
5. Box-collections	...	..	1,138,385
6. Street collections (under Central Organization) net proceeds :			

i. Amber badges	RM. 1,814,250			
ii. Aster Flowers	„ 1,412,842			
iii. Wooden Badges	„ 1,436,889			
iv. Lace Rosettes	„ 1,308,198			
v. Porcelain Badges	„ 1,253,047			
vi. Edelweiss Badges	„ 1,655,752			
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Total	...	...	RM. 8,471,483	
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7. "Central" functions :				
i. National Solidarity Day	RM. 4,021,594			
ii. German Police Day	„ 628,961			
iii. Mosaic Souvenir Tables	„ 388,725			
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Total	...	...	„ 5,039,279	
8. Gau (District) Functions	...	...	„ 3,071,983	
9. Gau Street Collections (net proceeds)	...	...	„ 1,688,839	
10. Other Collections and Gifts	...	...	„ 1,091,813	
<hr/>				
Total	...	...	RM. 150,344,325	
<hr/>				

The total cash collections for 1934-35 accounted for the following figures :

1. Carried forward from 1933-34	...	...	RM. 8,135,685
2. Central	...	...	„ 54,465,199
3. District	...	...	„ 150,344,325
<hr/>			
Total	...	...	RM. 212,945,209
<hr/>			

The category, *Eintopfgericht* (one pot meal), requires a word of explanation. The first Sunday of every month was observed as a day on which the householders prepared the entire meal in one pot, in the form, say, of *Khinchiri* (hodgepodge). The meal comprised only one plate. No second plate was therefore served. The meal thus prepared cost less than the regular meal on weekdays. There was thus a balance or saving and this was made over to the Relief Organization in cash. During 1934-35 this item accounted for RM. 29,581,379 (as against RM. 25,120,008 in 1933-34).

#### COLLECTIONS IN KIND AND PURCHASES OF GOODS

The collections in kind through the Central (including foreign) and district Organizations during 1934-35 were as follows :

1. Central	...	RM. 8,866,652
2. District	...	„ 101,567,120
3. Foreign		
(Central)	...	„ 9,848
<hr/>		
Total	...	RM. 110,448,620

The following table indicates the items in goods and services such as were collected to the tune of the above value :

1. Food stuffs ...	RM.	60,972,722
2. Fuel (wood, coal etc.) ...	„	3,099,606
3. Clothing ...	„	27,261,762
4. Tickets and Services ...	„	13,270,998
5. Domestic Articles ...	„	1,511,805
6. Other Articles ...	„	3,746,728
<hr/>		
Total ...	RM.	110,463,621

The items in goods and services on which the total cash collections (central and district), namely, RM. 212,945,209 were spent for distribution among the needy are described below :

1. Food stuff ...	RM.	70,898,298
2. Fuel ...	„	76,453,877
3. Clothing ...	„	46,717,907
4. Tickets and Services ...	„	45,205,134
5. Domestic Articles ...	„	5,201,091
6. Other Articles ...	„	2,146,177
<hr/>		
Total ...	RM.	246,622,485

It is to be understood that the Winter Relief Organizations got more than their money's worth. The market value of the goods on which they did not spend more than RM. 212,945,209 was RM. 246,622,485.

Goods and services were obtained by the organizations in two ways, first, direct as gifts from the donors, and, secondly, by purchase in the open market with cash collected from the donors. The total value of the goods is given below :

1. Food stuff ...	RM.	131,871,019
2. Fuel ...	„	79,553,483
3. Clothing ...	„	74,579,669
4. Tickets and Services ...	„	58,476,132
5. Domestic Articles ...	„	6,712,897
6. Other Articles ...	„	5,892,904
<hr/>		
Total ...	RM.	357,086,104

#### THE NUMBER RELIEVED

The number of persons relieved varied from district to district. The districts (*Gauen*) with the largest number of relief receivers are described below :

District.	Number Relieved.	Per cent. of total Population in the district.
1. Saxony ...	1,265,000	24.3
2. Silesia ...	1,260,000	26.9
3. Greater Berlin ...	785,000	18.5
4. Southern Westphalia ...	690,000	26.5
5. Northern Westphalia ...	655,000	24.2
6. Cologne-Aachen ...	620,000	27.1
7. Essen ...	600,000	31.5
8. Duesseldorf ...	598,000	27.5
9. Hesse-Nassau ...	582,000	19.1
10. East Prussia ...	506,000	21.7

It is to be remembered that the total relieved in the entire country was 18,866,571 and this was 21.1 per cent. of the total population of Germany.

The relief operations were carried on for six months from October 1934 to March 1935. There were variations in the number of relief-receivers from

month to month. The total 18,866,571 represents the monthly average for the

entire period. The relief-receivers can be grouped into six classes as follows :

				Monthly Average.
1. Receivers of Unemployment and Crisis relief ...	...	...	...	1,320,270
2. Receivers of welfare relief ...	...	...	...	638,880
3. Receivers of Annuities ...	...	...	...	871,909
4. Short-times Workers ...	...	...	...	70,746
5. Temporarily employed workers ...	...	...	...	1,436,548
6. Members of the Families of Relief receivers ...	...	...	...	9,538,268
Total Monthly Average ...				13,866,571

No distinction was made between the races or nationalities in the administration of winter-relief. During 1934-35 the number of Jews on the list of relief receivers was 29,108. Of this 13,916 belonged to Greater Berlin. Then, again, there were 69,336 men and women of foreign countries on whom also this charity was bestowed.

#### POOR RELIEF AND SOCIAL INSURANCE IN WINTER RELIEF

It should now be possible to understand concretely the morphological distinctions between winter relief and other forms of social service, old and new. Among the "modern" forms we have, as indicated above first, "poor relief" and secondly, "social insurance".

Winter relief differs essentially from "poor relief" as prevalent in England and the Western world for over three centuries. The system of "poor relief" is based on taxes or rates imposed by the authorities, local, rural or urban. But in winter-relief there are no rates or tax levied according to some financial legislation. The gifts are voluntary,

occasional and confined within a certain period of the year. Then, again, in "poor relief" the receivers of relief must belong to the locality which raises the rates. Winter relief, on the other hand, is distributed among the needy persons without reference to their domicile and without reference to the areas or sources of charity.

In social insurance, again, the relief can be enjoyed only by those persons,—wage-earners or salaried clerks,—who have paid a "premium" regularly although to the premium-fund there are contributions from employers and the state. But in winter-relief the relief is enjoyed by every needy person. No body has to pay a premium. It does not embody the principles of insurance in the remotest manner. It is charity, philanthropy or "sole" pure and simple.

#### THE GOODS DISTRIBUTED FOR RELIEF

It is exclusively in the form of goods that relief was administered. The *quantum* of some of the goods distributed among the relief-receivers can be seen below :

##### A. Food stuffs.

1. Potatoes	...	...	14,506,584 zentner (= cwt.)
2. Rye	...	...	381,522 „
3. Wheat	...	...	192,662 „
4. Rye flour	...	...	144,521 „
5. Wheat flour	...	...	311,988 „

6.	Bread	...	...	202,482 zentners (= cwt.s.)
7.	Butter	...	...	17,952 „
8.	Eggs	...	...	2,505,638 (number)
9.	Vegetables	...	...	134,604 zentner (= cwt.s.)
10.	Milk	...	...	4,778,070 litres (= quarts ... Bengal seers).
11.	Fruits	...	...	43,407 zentners (= cwt.s.)
12.	Rice	...	...	57,470 „
13.	Salt	...	...	1,766 „
14.	Cattle (living)	...	...	4,809 „
15.	Sugar	...	...	138,353 „
<b>B. Fuel</b>				
1.	Coal	...	...	51,001,712 zentners (= cwt.s.)
2.	Coke	...	...	23,213 „
<b>C. Clothing</b>				
1.	Suits	...	...	201,718 (number)
2.	Blouses	...	...	125,090 „
3.	Gloves	...	...	27,435 pairs
4.	Trousers	...	...	544,520 (number)
5.	Coats	...	...	690,674 „
6.	Overcoats	...	...	391,516 „
7.	Shoes	...	...	2,437,694 pairs
8.	Clothing materials	...	...	2,859,925 meters (= yards)
9.	Wool	...	...	1,170 zentner (= cwt.s.)
<b>D. Tickets and Services.</b>				
1.	Free tickets for theatre, concert, and cinema	...	...	1,160,398 (number)
2.	Free tickets for meals	...	...	1,359,134 „
3.	Tickets for clothing	RM.	4,149,586	„
4.	„ „ Food stuffs	„	30,668,976	„
5.	Services of learned professions	„	10,685	„
6.	„ „ Cottage industry	„	582,074	„
7.	Housing subventions	„	1,986,341	„
<b>E. Domestic Articles</b>				
1.	Beds	...	...	79,896 (number)
2.	Quilts	...	...	143,050 „
3.	Household utensils	...	...	215,976 „
4.	Furniture	...	...	14,901 „
5.	Sewing machines	...	...	294 „
<b>F. Other Articles</b>				
1.	Books	...	...	74,521 (number)
2.	Baby-carriages	...	...	5,501 „
3.	Presents (Christmas)	...	...	948,255 „
4.	Musical instruments	...	...	1,651 „
5.	Seeds (farming)	...	...	54,850 zentner (= cwt.s.)
6.	Toys	...	...	1,137,356 (number)
7.	Christmas Trees	...	...	741,486 „



### MUSHTIBHIKSHA AND WINTER-RELIEF COMPARED

In Bengal the householders are by tradition used to the system of *Mushtibhikshā* ("alms" in the form of "handfuls" say, of rice, pulses or other things). This would correspond to the *Sachspenden* (gifts in goods) of Germany. We get the following socio-economic equation.

German *Winterhilfe*—Bengali *Mushtibhikshā* on a Herculean scale.

No statistics appear ever to have been attempted in Bengal as to the *quantum* of rice or other goods that are given away in this manner during the course of the year to the needy men, women, and children. This age-long Bengali institution of charity in kind remains as yet unorganized and uncalculated. But Bengali families can claim all the same that in the spirit and form of social service their historic experience has stood a great world-test. Indeed, it is making a *Digvijaya* (world-conquest) in and through the epoch-making endeavours of the *Winterhilfswerk* in Germany.

The German charity in goods, let us repeat, amounting as it does to RM. 367,425,485 in six months for a population of 65 millions works out at the rate of a tax, so to say, of nearly Rs. 2-12-0 per head per annum. In Rupees-annas-pies this is a certainly stupendous figure for an extraordinary tax *per capita* as measured by the Bengali standard of collective wealth or public finance. But a study of the *Winterhilfswerk* is well calculated to inspire confidence of the Bengali people in the innate merits of its national and historic system of social solidarity or mutuality as embodied in *Mushtibhikshā*. Sociologically, we are forced to admit once more that not all primitive, ancient or medieval creations of

man are to be treated entirely as things of the past in the realm of human values. It cannot at the same time fail to open our eyes to the enormous wealth or "taxable capacity", organizing power, and last but not least, self-sacrifice of the German people.

The profound difference between the principles of *Mushtibhikshā* and those of Winter-relief must not be overlooked however. In *Mushtibhikshā* the contact between the giver and the receiver is direct and individual. There is a personal, one may say, a heart to heart touch in this system. This is the characteristic of all "primitive" and millennium-old i.e. Hindu, Buddhist, Jaina, Muslim, and Christian charities. *Mushtibhikshā* may be described as the system of the most "instinctive," human, universal, and humane poverty relief. It is an expression of the spirit of the *Gemeinschaft* (community) as contrasted with that of the *Gesellschaft* (society), to use two categories from the sociologist Ferdinand Toennies.

In Winter relief, on the other hand, although the system of getting alms or charities in the form of *Pfundsammlungen* (i.e. collections in quantities of lbs.) corresponding to the Bengali "handfuls" is prominent, the contact between the householder and the beggar is virtually nil. It is therefore very far removed from the traditional, instinctive, universal, and human philanthropy,—Hindu mercy, Jaina benevolence, Buddhist service, or Christian charity. In this system the most characteristic feature is the sway of the *Gesellschaft* (society) as distinguished from that of the *Gemeinschaft* (community). The power of pooling of resources, the might of organization, the spirituality of combined or collective relief mark winter-relief off from *Mushtibhikshā*.

Morphologically, therefore, as a form of social service winter-relief represents an entirely new creation of human will and intelligence. It is only during the epoch of the "second industrial revolution" with its tremendous institutions of collectivism, combination, centralism, rationalization, merger and what not that the social service structure associated with the winter-relief complex could be consummated. The dimensions are so colossal and the functioning of the organism so perfect that even fifty years ago the German people under, say, Bismarck could not have dreamt of it. We understand that today Germany (1933-36) is much more powerfully centralized, much more technically equipped and much more efficiently organized than she was in pre-war years. And naturally, therefore, although there is something in common between the Indian *Mushtibhikshâ* and the German winter-relief the latter would, strictly speaking, lie beyond the comprehension of the Indian people as of many other peoples in the East and the West situated on the socio-economic level of India.

For, among the numerous achievements of the Hitler-state has to be recorded the fact, that, as mentioned

above, nearly a third of the entire sum is raised in the form of *Mushtibhikshâ* (handfuls), so to say. About a million and a half workers are employed to carry on the operations. Of this number about five thousand only are paid workers. Less than one per cent. of the total amount spent on relief is accounted for by the expenses of the relief administration. The importance of these items cannot be fully realized, except by the institutions of "great powers" like England, U. S. A., France, Japan etc.

Some of the "Funds" organized in India by private bodies like the Ramkrishna Mission, and the Indian National Congress or the corporations and municipalities or even by small groups of individuals may enable us to understand from a great distance the kind of work that is being done in and through German winter-relief. To that extent *Mushtibhikshâ* may also be said to be advancing towards modernism in organization and technique.\*

\* The statistical data for this paper are derived from the *Rechenschaftsbericht of Winterhilfswerk des Deutschen Volkes* 1933-34 and 1934-35 (Berlin). See also B. K. Sarkar: *Social Insurance Legislation and Statistics: A study in the Labour-Economics of Neo-capitalism* (Calcutta 1936), and *The Sociology of Population* (Calcutta 1936).

## HISTORY OF THE VEDÂNTIC THOUGHT

BY SWAMI SATSWARUPANANDA

The Vedânta philosophy had its rise in the quest of unity, which is as old as reason itself. It was not found for the first time in the *Upanishads* alone. Much earlier than these, in the earliest Suktas of the *Rigveda Samhita*, we find this thought of unity beautifully and forcefully expressed. This is found not once or twice in a stray Mandala or two

but in almost all the Mandalas, as their crest-jewels.\* If the Mantras are not

\* A few of the numerous texts bearing out the truth of the statement: R.V. 1. 89. 10 ; 1. 154. 4 ; 1. 164. 46 ; 2. 1. 9 ; 2. 12. 8 ; 2. 16. 2 ; 2. 17. 4-6 ; 3. 51. 4 ; 3. 53. 8 ; 4. 42. 1-4 ; 5. 85. 6 ; 6. 30. 1 ; 6. 36. 4 ; 6. 67. 18 ; 7. 98. 6 ; 8. 39. 10 ; 8. 58. 2 ; 8. 70. 5 ; 10. 5. 1 ; 10. 81. 8 ; 10. 81. 8 ; 10. 82. 3 ; 10. 90. 2 ; 10. 114. 5 ; 10. 121. 1 ; etc.

to be considered as nonsensical jargons of Soma-bibbers, if any consistent meanings are to be derived from them, we have no other alternative but to admit that the Rishis meant what they freely expressed, and not what our so-called historical sense would have us concede to them. Neither Polytheism as the Greeks, the Romans, and their modern followers understand by it nor that ingeniously invented word Henotheism or Kathenotheism of Max Müller would give us a consistent explanation. If we want to remove all obscurities and inconsistencies, we are to accept the theory of one all-pervading, all-powerful, all-knowing Being manifesting Itself through cosmic forces and beauties of nature and through thoughts and activities of created beings, each of which is personified or symbolized by something tangible and therefore more easily adorable. Among the numerous *isms* it is difficult to assign a proper place to this theory. Nevertheless it is the key to all Vedic studies whose non-acceptance will raise numerous problems and complexities which will make darkness darker still. In spite of a good deal of differences among the various commentators from Yāska to Sāyana we find one thing clear : the same terms have been interpreted sometimes as the symbols and sometimes as the things symbolized in different contexts or even in the same context by the same as well as different commentators ; or both the meanings holding good, they have been offered as alternative suggestions. But in all these cases the variety is shared between the symbol and the thing symbolized ; and symbols, be it noted, were many and not one, and were spoken of and adored with the adoration of the thing symbolized, but with reference to either local or general, or temporary or permanent interest.

We can neither speak of a Samhitāic

age, a Brāhmaṇaic age, or an Upanishadic age, and trace the development of a crude polytheism into the sublime monotheism or monism. For there are *Brāhmaṇas* and *Upanishads* which are evidently earlier than many Suktas of the *Samhitās*. So it would be wrong to say that certain doctrines of the Samhitā age have been modified and developed into certain more sublime doctrines of the Upanishadic age. We are not to forget that the original *Vedas* (if we are permitted to use such a phrase) were not arranged in the manner we find them at present. How they were arranged we cannot say ; may be, in the way they were required in the process of Yajnas or sacrifices. But no one can be sure of that. The arrangement we get is a redaction of Vyāsa, who made no secret of his share of responsibility in this stupendous task of moulding the future culture of India.

It is equally difficult to assert that because ideas have developed in a certain way in other parts of the world, in India too they must have been evolved in the same manner. Here the premise itself is wrong. Has the Buddhism of the South and the North developed in the same way ? How different are the developments of the Latin and the Greek churches ! The fact is, there are so many cross-currents of environmental influence and initial bents of mind that peoples, like individuals, progress differently along different modes of perfection, finitely expressing the varied phases of the Infinite Whole. And it is very difficult to say which philosophy, art, literature, or culture, or any phase of any of them, is higher or lower, complex or simple. For thoughts and thought-products are higher or lower, simple or complex only with reference to individual or group minds, whose tastes, tendencies, and capacities to grasp certain things to the exclusion of

certain others, widely differ. Hence it is erroneous to hold that all nations must progress under certain arbitrarily fixed laws. The period of the Indian history from the birth of Buddha up till now shows, in a general way, that the march of religion and philosophy has been from Advaita to Dvaita, from monism to pluralism. And yet it is held that man naturally progresses just in the reverse way, from pluralism to monism. The more ancient literature of India reveals nothing which would warrant us to set aside the verdict of the historic age. For all the *Vedas*, *Tantras*, and *Purāṇas*, whether ancient or comparatively modern, are permeated through and through with the Advaitic conception. This Advaita is the basic principle, the foundation of the entire Indo-Aryan culture. We are not speaking of the pre-Vedic culture but of the Vedic and post-Vedic, and it is broad-based on Advaita, the theory that the One is appearing as the Many.

## II

The Buddha, when he realized the highest truth, thought of keeping it within himself, not from any selfish motive but from the fact that it was too high to be imparted to and understood by the people. He was, however, prevailed upon to preach for the good of mankind what they could grasp and profit by. He preached and was heard and followed; yet he did not stoop down to still lower manifestations of truth to touch the heart of all. This defect had to be made up by his disciples with the introduction of an elaborate ritualism. Ordinary embodied beings want something tangible, something concrete, to start with; hence the necessity of ritualism, of symbols and icons in all practical religions. The Vedic Rishis, with truer practical insight into human nature in general and to the mental

growth of the people in the midst of whom they lived in particular, deided nothing, left out nothing, but utilized everything, even the lowest manifestations of truth, as sure steps to the realization of the highest truth. They never lost an opportunity of driving home the highest truths into the brains of the sacrificers and others present on the occasions of Yajnas without their knowing it, by way of chants and story-tellings, which are invariable interludes on such occasions. As they develop, they see new meanings in chants and sacrifices, and they are considered as Mantras and symbols, till at last all are discarded as superfluous and the intuition is complete in the merging of the All in the One—from unreasoned acts with the help of concrete things through reason with symbols into the intuition of unity without variety, this seems to be the method of training the people into the highest truth. In every age there were Rishis, and the common folk in almost infinite degrees of mental development, from the lowest to the highest. Thus rites, symbols, abstract meditation of qualities and the highest intuition—all are necessary in every age and in every clime. Hence we find all these in the *Vedas* very ingeniously interwoven, for the use of the common folk, gradually releasing the more developed souls from much of their obligations, into absolute freedom at last. The *Vedas* do not so much show the strata of a progressive philosophical thought, as grades of co-existing thoughts, symbols, and rites suited to the minds of variously developed souls living in the same society at the same time as well as throughout the ages.

The *Samhitās* appear as consisting of hyperbolic hymns addressed to numerous deities, objects of sacrifice and creatures and beauties of nature, because they are *Samhitās* or collections

having divided the *Vedas* into convenient books and distributed the latter to his own disciples for committing them to memory themselves and propagating the same among their disciples in their turn. We have a few recensions of the *Vedas*, but they are not many, as we should have expected regarding the most ancient book of the world. And this is because we get the Vyâsa version of the *Vedas* only, with passages altered here and there in the course of being handed down from one generation of disciples to another, each generation trying its best to hand over the sacred trust to the next as untarnished by personal elements as possible. But this man of wonderful insight had an equally astounding foresight—he felt that in spite of all his attempts to check them, differences must arise; and he prevented the possible differences from being fatal by giving his own interpretation of the *Vedas* and further furnishing the clue to correct interpretation in future. This is the *Vedânta-Sûtras*, readers of which will find at every turn of it a wonderful spirit of synthesis. It is in fact the highest intellectual synthesis ever made and presented to the world so briefly and so clearly.

According to the *Sûtras* and therefore according to the *Vedas*, whose interpretation they are, this world of nature and individual souls are not merely what they generally appear to be, viz. varied and distinct though inter-related. They have a deeper source, goal, and urge which is not only not unconscious but including consciousness far transcends it into a limitless superconscious, the hidden operator of everything that happens in the domains of the unconscious and the conscious. This is termed Brahman, the Vast, the One Whole, which looked at from different planes of consciousness, appear variously. All these views have been

subsumed under one general head, latterly known as the Vyavahâric or relative standpoint. Looked at from this standpoint the Reality appears to us as Unity-in-plurality, the Unity being the ultimate ground and guide, permanent and unchangeable, of the plurality which is in a state of incessant flux, not outside of but in It, and related to It as Its modal expressions. But from the Pâramârthic or absolute standpoint, if such a contradictory phrase is allowed to express an inexpressible fact of intuition, this Reality is Unity in which there is no trace of plurality, a fact which intellect by its very nature cannot comprehend. The individual souls, so long as they retain this relative consciousness, are limited in every respect, act and are acted upon, and are subject to joys and sorrows; but in their essence they are the same as the Absolute, appearing different and small through ignorance of their real nature which they can and do attain by self-exertion and through the grace of Iswara. Viewed from the relative standpoint, these souls, when they realize their own absolute nature, appear to be different from but in tune with the Absolute sharing in Its joy and powers though in a limited way and under His sufferance. This is how they appear to others. To themselves they appear as the Absolute either playfully enjoying, and taking part in, the sport of creation, preservation, and destruction or merged in the quintessence of the Reality, which is pure consciousness without the dual division of subject and object. One and the same Brahman appears as one or many, takes or does not take names and forms, is Unity-without-difference, difference-cum-unity or unity-in-difference, because It is viewed from different planes of consciousness; in reality It is Consciousness Itself.

The chief aim of Vyâsa, as we have

seen, in composing the *Vedānta-Sūtras* was to furnish a correct interpretation of the Vedantic passages of doubtful meaning, which led him to the brief but clear restatement of the whole Vedānta philosophy. Quite in consonance with this aim he had another, which refuses to be relegated to a secondary place. The Sūtras are a direct and vehement attack on the Sāṃkhya philosophy of Kapila, the oldest rationalist school caring very little for the Vedic passages, though preaching the same philosophy in its own way. The attack has a vehemence which has led the sage sometimes to an unwarranted excess, as is shown in his explanation of the famous *Svetāsvatara* text. But this had to be done, and the defence against extreme reactions is often guilty of some excess in the other direction. How wise was this step of Vyāsa is fully realized when we consider the nihilistic developments of Buddhism born of Sāṃkhya philosophy. Vyāsa understood that a system which lays more emphasis on reason than on intuition, is bound, even though it is itself born of intuition, to end in dangerous half-truths by leading the intellectuals to the barren field of nihilism and the general mass to dark superstitions.

The fault of Kapila was just this. Preaching no new system of thought he made no reference to the *Vedas*, the accepted mass of revelations or intuitions; and being more concerned with Moksha or Liberation than with a fine metaphysical theory he was busy in advocating the unattached nature of the self and the method of regaining this lost paradise and in attributing all phenomena, all actions and reactions, to a separate hypothetical entity whose real nature he never explained fully. Vyāsa with a truer insight into human nature and a bent for intuition more than reason had to lead an attack on

Kapila's philosophy. Vyāsa's criticism of Kapila is in reality more of a nature of fulfilment than of destruction. Keep Kapila intact, subjoin his reason to intuition and supply the real nature of Prakṛiti, and you get Vyāsa. But what a difference does it make in the outlook on life! Kapila cannot properly explain the first verse of the Khila-kāṇḍa of the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, nor had he any business to do that. Vyāsa can do it in the grand orthodox way, supplying a sublime import even to the trivialities of life, making life as wide as it is deep—to him life too is Brahman.

The *Vedas* speak of Brahman in two different ways, sometimes as void of all qualities and actions, of all changes and transformations, as an Eternal Witness having nothing to witness, which is as good as saying that It is not even an witness which is in fact the real significance of the technical term; sometimes again as the originator, preserver, and destroyer of the universe, the real agent and enjoyer of every action and thing. The Rishis saw this in their vision beatific and they recorded what was revealed to them without adducing any reason for that, little knowing perhaps that it involves a contradiction in rational sphere. Vyāsa, true to the ancient Rishis, stated the same fact, but with a consciousness of a demand for reason, which he has not supplied (or at least very explicitly) in his *Brahma-Sūtras*, but which he has done in his *Purāṇas* by the frequent use of a half metaphorical and half philosophical term Mâyā, a term not altogether absent in the *Vedas*. To give a rational explanation of the apparent contradictory nature of Brahman is a task, which was left for another massive personality, Saṃkara, who has done it in his famous commentary on Vyāsa's *Brahma-Sūtras* and numerous other works.

(To be continued)

## ATMABODHA

By SWAMI SIDDHATMANANDA

सम्यग्विज्ञानवान् योगी स्वात्मन्येवाखिलं स्थितम्  
एकं च सर्वमात्मानमीक्षते ज्ञानचक्षुषा ॥ ४७ ॥

सम्यग्विज्ञानवान् योगी A Yogi who has attained perfect Self-realization स्वात्मनि in his own self एव verily अखिलं the whole world स्थितम् resting सर्वे everything च and एकं One आत्मानं the Atman ज्ञानचक्षुषा with the eyes of Knowledge ईक्षते sees.

47. A Yogi who has attained perfect Self-realization sees with the eyes of Knowledge the whole world resting in his own self and also everything as the One Atman.

आत्मैवेदं जगत् सर्वमात्मनोऽन्यन्न किञ्चन ।

मृदो यद्वत् घटादीनि स्वात्मानं सर्वमीक्षते ॥ ४८ ॥

इदं This सर्वं जगत् whole universe आत्मा Atman एव alone ; यद्वत् मृदः ( अन्वत् ) घटादीनि ( न सन्ति ) as there are no earthen pots etc. without earth ( तद्वत् so ) आत्मनः अन्वत् किञ्चन न ( अस्ति ) nothing exists without the Atman ; ( योगी a Yogi ) सर्वे everything स्वात्मानमीक्षते sees as his own self.

48. A Yogi sees everything as his own self—the whole universe is the Atman alone ; nothing exists without the Atman just as the earthen pots etc. are nothing but earth.

जीवन्मुक्तस्तु तद्विद्वान् पूर्वोपाधिगुणांस्त्यजेत् ।

सच्चिदानन्दरूपत्वं भजेद् भ्रमरकीटवत् ॥ ४९ ॥

तत् That जीवन्मुक्तः one liberated-in-life विद्वान् wise man न indeed पूर्वोपाधिगुणान् the former attributes and characteristics त्यजेत् gives up ; ( सः he ) भ्रमरकीटवत् like a cockroach being transformed into a *Bhramara* worm सच्चिदानन्दरूपत्वं the state of Existence, Intelligence and Bliss भजेत् attains to.

49. The wise man liberated-in-life gives up his former attributes and characteristics and attains to the state of Existence, Intelligence and Bliss just as a cockroach is transformed into a *Bhramara*<sup>1</sup> worm.

<sup>1</sup> *Bhramara*—There is a popular belief that a cockroach when caught by a worm known as *Bhramarakita* thinks intently on it through fear and is changed into a *Bhramarakita*.

Verses 49-53 describe the characteristics of a man who attains liberation-in-life. See *Vivekachudamani*, verses 425-441.

तीर्त्वा मोहार्णवं हत्वा रागद्वेषादिराक्षसान् ।

योगी शान्तिसमायुक्त आत्मारामो विराजते ॥ ५० ॥

सीदार्णवं तीर्त्वा। Crossing the ocean of delusion रागद्वेषादिराक्षसान् the demons such as attachment, aversion and the like हत्वा destroying योगी a Yogi शान्तिममायुक्तः established in tranquility आत्मारामः finding delight in his own self ( सन् becoming ) बिराजते remains.

50. The tranquil-minded Yogi having crossed the ocean of delusion and destroyed the demons of attachment, aversion etc. remains delighting only in his own self.

बाह्यानिव्यसुखासक्तिं हित्वात्मसुखनिर्वृतः ।

घटस्थदीपवच्छब्दन्तरेव प्रकाशते ॥ ५१ ॥

बाह्यानिव्यसुखासक्तिं Attachment to external and transient pleasures हित्वा giving up आत्मसुखनिर्वृतः merged in the bliss of his own self ( सन् being योगी a Yogi ) घटस्थदीपवत् undisturbed like a light inside a pot शब्दन्तरेव eternally अन्तरेव within himself प्रकाशते shines.

51. Giving up attachment to all external and transient pleasures and being merged in the bliss of his own self, a Yogi shines eternally within himself (i.e. remains Self-illuminated), like a light remaining undisturbed inside a pot.

उपाधिस्थोऽपि तद्धर्मैरलिप्तो व्योमवन्मुनिः ।

सर्वविन्मूढवत् तिष्ठेदसक्तो वायूवच्चरेत् ॥ ५२ ॥

मुनिः A sage उपाधिस्थोऽपि even being conditioned by limitations (of the body, mind, senses, etc.) तद्धर्मैः by their characteristics व्योमवत् like the sky अलिप्तः unaffected ( सः he ) सर्वविन् all-knowing ( सन् becoming ) मूढवत् like an ignorant man. तिष्ठेत् remains असक्तः unattached ( सन् being ) वायूवत् like the air चरेत् moves.

52. Though subject to the limitations (of the body, mind, senses, etc. ) a sage is untainted by their characteristics, like the sky ; though all-knowing he remains like an ignorant person, and being unattached he moves like wind.

As the space enclosed in a jar (i.e. though subjected to limitations or *Upadhis*) remains unaffected by the properties of the jar, as a crystal though appearing red due to the proximity of a red flower does not actually become red, and as the sun does not move when the water on which it is reflected moves, even so the man of realisation though possessed of a body is yet without identification with it, and lives untouched by its characteristics. Outwardly there is no difference between him and an ignorant man. Rather, he appears sometimes to be a fool, sometimes a sage, sometimes a madman and sometimes a child etc., as his mind is not related to earthly things. People judge him in diverse ways to which he is totally indifferent. (See *Vivekachudamani*, verses 539-542).

उपाधिविलयाद् विष्णौ निर्विशेषं विशेन्मुनिः ।

जले जलं वियद् व्योम्नि तेजस्तेजसि वा यथा ॥ ५३ ॥

विष्णौ उपाधिविलयात् The limiting adjuncts being dissolved into the One All-pervading Existence यथा जले जलं, व्योम्नि वियत् वा तेजसि तेजः ( लीयते ) as when mixed up



water becomes one with water, sky one with the sky, and fire one with fire ( तथा so ) मुनिः a sage निर्विशेषं विज्ञेत् merges into the Absolute.

53. A sage merges into the Absolute when his limiting adjuncts dissolve into the One All-pervading Existence just as water when mixed up becomes one with water, sky one with the sky and fire one with fire.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

The opening article is from some of the *Class Talks* that Swami Vivekananda gave during the period of his second visit to America . . . . The existing conditions of maladjustment between agriculture and industries in India are the root causes of the distress of an average Indian suffering from unemployment and under-employment. In the Editorial we have dealt with the problem and shown how *The Industrial Development of India* is a crying need of the country. . . . *Reminiscences of Girish Chunder Ghose* are some of the extracts taken from an article published in the last April issue of *The Occult Review*. Mrs. Gray Hallock was a personal friend of the great dramatist and disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, hence the reminiscences breathe a charming fragrance of the personality of the memorable Bengali genius. . . . In *The Educational Philosophy of John Milton* Dr. Debendra Chandra Dasgupta discusses the views of the famous English poet who was undoubtedly one of the strong supporters of the liberal humanistic movement in education. . . . *What is Duty?* is compiled from some of the talks which Swami Yatiswarananda gave in his classes at Wiesbaden in Germany. . . . *Social Service in German Winter Relief* is a lecture which Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar delivered at Bangiya German Vidyâ Samsad in 1911 at in the Buddhist Hall, Calcutta.

. . . Swami Satswarupananda is a monk of the Ramakrishna Order. In this part of his article on *History of the Vedântic Thought* he traces the development of the Vedânta philosophy up to the time when Sankara appears in the field.

### RELIGION AND RITES

Humanity is as divided today as ever. Economic, political, and religious conflicts have split the nations and the peoples of the world into numberless warring camps. It is a standing challenge to all who have the good of humanity at heart to overcome these differences. Among the many who desire to bring about such a consummation there are those who believe in religion and those who do not. Those who consider religion unnecessary accept a materialistic philosophy of life. They not only rob human life of all its worth but build upon sand. Those who believe in religion fall into two groups. Eminent intellectuals who pin their faith on religion are sick with dogmas and rituals. They want a faith devoid of all outward observances and embellishments whose heavy weight seems to smother the spirit of man. Worthlessness and inefficacy of rites and dogmas have been repeated so often in the present times that the denunciation has become trite. A dry and arid faith, they imagine, would solve the problem

of religious conflicts. There are others, however, who take a more rational view. They realize the inevitability and the essential need of rituals for the religious. Though the same truths are to be found, more or less, in all the religions of world, yet the needs of different types of peoples have developed varieties of religious rites and ceremonies which nourish their spiritual life. The case is similar with the various creations of art. Artists of different ages and countries have felt the same form of beauty in an object but they have tried to recapture it in their creations through different media. Men respond to the appeal of the same form of beauty through divergent material expressions. Artistic expressions vary with different peoples because they stand at different levels of culture. So with religion. Our spiritual conceptions and experiences seek outward expression, and the result is various forms of worship and ceremonies which help to develop spirituality among different men. And as one ascends higher and higher in the scale of spirituality, forms and ceremonies satisfy him less and less. He seeks delight in the joys of pure spirit. As Plato has said that when wisdom dawns upon man he becomes absorbed in the contemplation of the pure form of beauty.

It is only upon a recognition of the truth and necessity of different kinds of outward manifestations of spiritual life that real religious harmony can be established. Ramakrishna was the first in the modern world to preach and practise in a clear manner such an attitude which marks him out as the prophet of a new outlook. Thoughtful persons are coming to realize the necessity of rites. They are not wholly useless. Speaking at a meeting of the World Fellowship of Faiths held in London in July last Sir S. Radhakrishnan forcefully and beautifully expressed this

truth. Said he, "Attempts are made, now and again, to have a purely spiritual religion without creeds and sacraments, a religion of heart and mind, but they cannot succeed, for inward living must have outward expression. Even as the soul fashions for itself a body to complete its otherwise imperfect life on earth, so man's thoughts and ideas tend to embody themselves in some concrete form, which appeals to the imagination and the senses, but there is no reason why we should force others to adopt the same forms and apprehend things exactly as we apprehend them. So far as outer expressions are concerned, there must be freedom of manifestation. All that we need insist on is that the outward visible expression must be entirely governed by and obedient to the ever-growing inward Truth. Dogmas and rites are not unnecessary or unworthy or negligible, for they are aids and supports to religion, though they are not its essence. Dogma is a temporary mould into which spiritual life may flow but it should not become a prison in which it dies. An idea is a power, not when it is simply professed but when it is inwardly creative. A symbol is there to help us to realise in life the thing symbolised. All these function properly when they bring about a change in human life. Yajñavalkya tells us that the chief aim of rites and ceremonies, of ethical codes demanding self-control and non-violence, charity and study is to enable one to attain by Yoga insight into the eternal. . ." A real fellowship of faiths can be based only upon a vision of the psychological unity and spiritual oneness of mankind, and unless such a vision is developed fellowship of peoples can at best be attempted through outward and political adjustments. "But the higher hope of humanity lies in the growing number of men who will devote

themselves to the task of accomplishing a spiritual oneness of world, enriched by a free inner variation and a freely varied self-expression."

### EVOLUTION OF HINDU RELIGION

We have before us a summary of a lecture delivered by Prof. R. C. Majumdar of Dacca University on the Historical Evolution of Hindu Religion before the Historical Association of the University. Here we find stated a number of unqualified generalizations about the character of the evolution, which we find hard to reconcile with a number of known facts. True, a summary does not furnish details; it indicates only the broad conclusions. But it is precisely about the latter that we have reasons to differ. Of several statements which we would prefer to be stated in a modified manner we have space here for brief comments upon two only. The Doctor says that the Vedic religion dominated India for nearly a thousand years from C. 1,500 B.C. to 500 B.C. And the period which followed is said to have witnessed revolutionary changes in religion characterized by (i) the rise of the theistic systems like Saivism and Bhāgavatism which insisted on a belief in a personal God to be worshipped with devotion (Bhakti), rather than an impersonal and absolute God to be realized through meditation and knowledge only; and by (ii) "the growth of a spirit of reaction against the fundamental conceptions of the Vedic religion, which denied the authority of the Vedas, repudiated the efficacy of sacrifices (yajna), particularly the slaughter of animals, decried the caste system, and laid stress on morality, instead of absent (abstract?) knowledge."

The proposition that a religious *revolution* about 600 B.C. supplanted the old Vedic religion is demonstrably un-

true. Such an opinion, however, has long been current among a large section of Orientalists who have not carried their investigations far enough or who have failed to discern the unbroken line of religious tradition in India hailing from time immemorial. Saivism, Bhāgavatism and Buddhism are all offshoots of the Vedic religion. Especially in the case of the former two there were absolutely no *revolutionary* changes. This is apparent from a consideration of the following facts. The devotional element, the basis of theism, is present in the Vedas. Throughout the vast extent of the Vedic literature we find the sentiment of devotion expressed not only to particular gods but also to one Supreme God. The worship of Paramesvara in human form may be absent in the Vedic period. But that is not the point at issue. The moot point is whether the path of devotion as a means to Realization is found in the Vedas. Though the *Upanishads* declare that Release is to be obtained by means of knowledge, yet they prescribe the worship of qualified symbols like the mind, the ether, the sun, the fire etc., inasmuch as the unqualified Brahman is difficult to grasp. Several *Upanishads* declare gods like Rudra, Vishnu, Siva as forms of the Paramātman. The *Svetāsvatara Upanishad* even contains the expression Mahesvara, and declares that by realizing God all bonds are broken (Jñātvā devam muchyate servapāśaih. *Svet. Up.* 5. 13). We meet there also with the expression "one who has supreme devotion to God" (Yasya deve parā bhakti. *Svet. Up.* 6. 23). The existence of the path of devotion in Vedic times is further satisfactorily proved by references in Pāṇini. After explaining in a Sutra that Bhakti is to be taken as meaning 'that, towards which devotion exists' (Pā. 4. 8. 95), it says that the man who is devoted to

Vāsudeva should be called Vāsudevaka, and the man who is a devotee of Arjuna should be called Arjunaka (Vāsudevārjunābhyām 'bun. Pā. 4. 3. 98). The commentator Patanjali in commenting upon this Sutra says that the word 'Vāsudeva' in this Sutra is the name of a Kshatriya, or of the 'Bhagavanta'. The above not only shows that the path of devotion is a development out of the Vedic religion but pushes the date of rise of theism much earlier than 500 B.C., for Pānini is certainly pre-Buddhist. The Bhāgavata religion as preached in the *Gīta*, which is perhaps the earliest document of it, and the *Bhāgavatam*, is clearly based upon Vedic doctrines. The *Gīta* synthesizes the Vedantic metaphysics with Sāṃkhyan cosmology. In the *Gīta* devotion to Lord is preached on a Vedāntic basis. Even the Lord claims hoary antiquity for his Yoga. Saivism and Bhāgavatism never denied fundamental Vedic conceptions. They accept Knowledge, Karma, Rebirth and Varnāshrama. The *Bhāgavatam* even sanctions the slaughter of animals for Yajna. Even Buddhism cannot be said to be a revolutionary departure from Vedic tradition. If Buddhism has denied the

efficacy of Yajnas and condemned ritualism and the slaughter of animals, so have done several of the *Upanishads* like *Isa* and *Mundaka*. Even the observance of silence on the question of God does not constitute a reaction against Vedic religion. Though the Mimāṃsā and the Sāṃkhya have no place for God in their philosophy, it would be hardihood to say that they are non-Vedic. All of them accept the fundamental Vedic doctrines.

Further, Dr. Majumdar asserts that the contact with Islam in the medieval times and the West in the 19th century introduced a spirit of rationalism into the Hindu Religion. We do not know what is exactly meant by the Doctor. Does he mean Hindu society? If not, does he deny rationalism to the *Upanishads*? It is difficult to follow him, the more so as he apparently contradicts himself soon after by saying about Ramakrishna that he "combined the rationalism of the Upanishad with the emotionalism of the medieval age." The fact is that Hinduism has always been characterized by a wonderfully rationalistic and catholic outlook in matters of religion, though rigid orthodoxy has all along marked its social institutions.

## ADVAITA ASHRAMA

(AN APPEAL FOR A LIBRARY)

Swami Vivekananda felt that if India were to rise she must first of all gain a measure of self-confidence which would spring from a rediscovery of her almost forgotten soul. The message of Vedānta has to be made dynamic and aggressive. The Ramakrishna Mission came into existence with this idea. Some forty years ago the same purpose guided him to found the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, as a part of the bigger organization, in a quiet corner of the Himalayas. This Ashrama, he intended, would be a suitable place where monks would mould their lives on Vedāntic principles; it would also be a centre from which they would help to spread the great spiritual message of India in this country and abroad. For nearly four decades the Ashrama has tried to perform the latter task mainly in three ways. Its publication department has carried the dynamic message of Vedānta to a large public in India and the outside

world by bringing out a fairly extensive Ramkrishna-Vivekananda literature. Thanks to its efforts the message has already found its way into several of the leading languages of Europe. Secondly, it has served as a kind of nursery for preachers who, after years of training, have moved to different parts of India as well as to many countries in Europe and America, and are steadily propagating the message of Vedānta. Thirdly, since its inception it has been conducting this journal which was started more than forty years ago. The long career of the paper flatters us to believe that it has been of some service to the cause of Indian culture. We have, however, had to work under great handicaps as regards the training up of preachers and the running of this magazine and its publication department. The most serious among them has been the want of a well-furnished library which is so essential for self-improvement and for the running of any high class journal, especially in such an out-of-the-way place. We have a small library which is inadequate to our needs. Our funds do not permit of quick expansion. We are aware that many among our readers often feel inclined to make gifts of books, magazines, and libraries for the benefit of worthy causes and institutions. We appeal to them who are so disposed for such donations which we shall always be glad to receive and acknowledge with thanks. All books except those of a technical scientific nature would be welcome. Donors who want to make gifts of a large number of books will kindly inform us, and we will intimate to them the proper manner of sending them to us.

SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA,

*President, Advaita Ashrama,*

*Mayavati, Almora, U.P.*

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**THE SOCIOLOGY OF POPULATION.** By Professor Benoy Kumar Sarkar. *Published by N. M. Ray Chowdhury & Co., 12, College Street, Calcutta, 1936. Price Rs. 3. Pp. 139. Eight charts.*

As mentioned in the Preface, the book under review contains in part the Presidential Address of the learned author at the Sociological Section of the first Indian Population Conference (Lucknow, 3-4 February, 1936) with some additions and also some other materials.

The independent view taken by Prof. Sarkar regarding the scope of Sociology had better be described in his own words which are as follows:

### "I. Theoretical Sociology:

1. Institutional Sociology (family, property, state, myth, arts and crafts, sciences, mores, languages).

(a) Anthropology and history as well as sociography.

(b) Social philosophy and philosophical history.

2. Psychological Sociology, Sociology proper in the narrow sense.

(a) Social Psychology.

(b) Social Processes and Social Forms.

II. Applied Sociology. Study in the

attempts at the re-making of man, societal planning and the transformation of the world by promoting 'social metabolism' along diverse fronts."

What, according to the learned Professor, is the connection between Sociology and Population? Population, according to him, touches Sociology at every point and in every branch, and Sociology, in his view, is interested in every aspect of the question from the biological and the eugenic to the criminological, the sanitary, the pedagogic, the economic and the political.

The population of India has risen from 318 millions and odd in 1921 to 352 millions and odd in 1931. This growth in population has led several writers and publicists to raise the scare that India is becoming dangerously over-populated. Prof. Sarkar sharply differs from this view. He points out that over-population is a purely relative question; it must always be understood with reference to economic resources and opportunities. He expresses the opinion that the question of the optimum density of population like that of the standard of living or of diet is a purely relative one and hence it is not possible to state with precision as to what is the optimum density of population in a

particular region or country. In any case, however, as he says, the rate of growth of population in India is not something extraordinary or unusual. In that respect the world has to fear more from several other countries than from India. There is no reason, it is pointed out, to fear food shortage in India and the view is advanced that the alleged over-population of India is certainly a questionable proposition.

Prof. Sarkar does not appear to favour birth control for the restriction of India's population growth but rather to advocate larger families. Birth control, he points out, may not necessarily limit population growth. Besides, restriction of population, howsoever it is brought about, may, other circumstances remaining the same, cause less production and hence greater poverty.

Discussing the question of the quality of population, he points out that it does not depend on numbers and that the extinction or, deterioration of the *élites* need cause no anxiety, as the young, the 'inferior' and the down-trodden of today become the torch-bearers of culture and civilization tomorrow. This idea is exemplified with reference to Bengal and Japan which were but non-entities a few decades back and also with reference to several castes, races and groups in Bengal. As regards Bengal in particular, the several factors which have and are contributing to Bengal's progress and thereby raising the quality of the population, are discussed in detail. Bengal may yet be very much behind the Great Powers but, our author is careful to point out, that compared with the condition of about 60 per cent. of the more backward portion of Europe's population, the progress that has been achieved by Bengal is not negligible. And, 'the highest is yet to come'.

It is not possible to refer within the short compass of this brief review to all the fruitful and original ideas contained in the book. We cannot however, forbear mentioning that every page of it bears the stamp of Prof. Sarkar's well-known scholarship and originality and that it contains several valuable suggestions as regards lines of original research.

The tone of the book is highly optimistic and the passages with respect to Bengal are such as would delight the heart of every patriot.

The section on 'the Bengali Religion of World Conquest' is not only one of the best pieces ever written on Ramkrishna-Viveka-

nanda but also shows in a very striking manner the intimate inter-connection between the Ramkrishna-Vivekananda movement and Bengal's progress in general in recent times.

The book deserves to be read and assimilated by students of Sociology and Population, by statesmen and politicians, and also by every worker in the cause of India or Bengal.

SHIB CHANDRA DUTT

SRI SWAMI NARAYANA. A GOSPEL OF BHAGWAT DHARMA OR GOD IN REDEMPTIVE ACTION. BY BHAI MANILAL C. PAREKH. *Sri Bhagvat-Dharma Mission House, Rajkot, India. Pp. 350. Price. Superior Rs. 5 or 10s. Popular Rs. 4 or 8s.*

The course of a nation's history is never a continuous ascent on an easy gradient of progress. Periods of bright glory alternate with periods of the deepest gloom. India has been no exception to this phenomenon. One of the darkest phases of her history has been the period towards the close of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century when she seems to have descended to the very nadir of her political degradation and spiritual degeneration. Fortunately India has never lost the breed of noble blood, and great sons appeared on her soil at the time to rescue her from the utter humiliation. Such a noble son is Swami Narayana of whose life and mission we have an able account in the work before us. The saint was a contemporary of Raja Rammohun Roy and thus chronologically belongs to modern India, though logically that is, in culture and outlook it is more proper to count him among the saints of medieval India. The story of his life reveals him to be not only a high spiritual personality but also a great reformer who worked for the purification of the corrupt religious and social atmosphere of his day. His name is little known beyond the borders of Gujarat, though in point of spiritual effort and achievement he seems to stand superior even to the Raja. The Raja not only put too many irons in the fire but worked in the stabler conditions of Bengal and the East, while the Swami had to toil in the troubled waters of an unsettled country. Unlike the host of modern reformers, he was a product of the orthodox Hinduism, untouched by any alien influence from the West. And so in his life we can discern marks of a genuine revival of the indigenous culture.

The materials for his life are abundant. It is rather their plentifulness which offers some difficulty in the way of selection. Bulky legends and numerous traditions have gathered round his name. It is hard to sift fact from fiction. The author has kept an open mind, without being squeamish about his sources. He has not discarded miracles, though he has not stressed them. Rightly he has tried to keep the moral and spiritual appeal of the saint to the foreground. His outlook is more devotional than critical. And he writes with a restraint, catholicity of outlook, and breadth of vision that are praiseworthy.

The story of the saint's life may read strange to foreign ears but it is in line with the stories of all great and genuine seekers after God. Swami Sahajananda or Swami Narayana as he came to be better known was born in 1781 A.D. in Oudh. The second son of a Brahmin father, his early name was Ghanshyam. Quite early he evinced his strong bent towards spirituality. Renouncing home at the tender age of eleven he travelled across India in the company of holy men, at times stopping with some to have a little training and instruction in spirituality. But his heart was not satisfied. At last he wandered to Kathiawar and found in Ramananda the person whom he seemed to be looking for. Ramananda at once perceived the greatness of the young aspirant and treated him with the greatest consideration. And two years later when he lay on his death-bed he nominated the young disciple of barely twenty summers to be his successor ignoring the claims of other aged followers. Then follow the wonderful story of his ministry, his bold reforms and organization of the Satsang which did so much to purify the spiritual atmosphere of Kathiawar. The influence of his liberal movement is still potent. His exceptional purity, holiness, and high spiritual realizations have made his followers look upon him as an Incarnation of God. In the deep reverence which the men of Kathiawar still pay to ochre-clothed monks one can still feel the abiding influence of his great personality.

## FRENCH

MON MAITRE. SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. TRADUIT DE L'ANGLAIS PAR JEAN HERBERT. *Union Des Imprimeries (S.A.). Frameries. Dir : V. Quenon. Pp. 62.*

L'HOMME REEL ET L'HOMME APPARENT. VIVEKANANDA. TRADUIT DE L'ANGLAIS PAR JEAN HERBERT. *Union Des Imprimeries (S.A.). Frameries. Dir : V. Quenon. Depositaires : pour la France : Adrien Maisonneuve, 11, rue Saint-Sulpice, Paris. pour la Suisse : Delachaux et Niestlé, Neuchâtel. Pp. 44.*

The message of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda has reached a large public in Central Europe through Mon. Romain Rolland's works. As a result signs are forthcoming of an eagerness to have a closer acquaintance with their teachings. In order to satisfy this desire Mon. Jean Herbert has undertaken to bring out a series of translations of the works of Vivekananda into French. The books under review are the first fruits of his labours. They are translations respectively of *My Master* and *The Real and the Apparent Man* by Swami Vivekananda. The rendering is easy and clear. It is hoped that these and other translations which are coming out shortly will carry the genuine message of India to the French speaking public.

## BENGALI

GITA-SÂR-SAMGRAHA. A SELECTION OF HUNDRED VERSES FROM THE GITA. BY SWAMI PREMESHANANDA Published by Subodh Chandra Dey, Dacca. Assam Bengal Library, Pn. 120. Price As. 8.

This is a collection of a hundred verses from the Gita, arranged topically under ten chapters. Along with the text in the original have been given the paraphrasings of the verses, their translation in Bengali, word-meanings, occasional grammatical notes and a short gloss. The work has been done carefully, and an attempt has been made to preserve a link among the different chapters which include all the essential doctrines of the *Gîtâ*.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### REV. J. T. SUNDERLAND

With the passing away of Rev. J. T. Sunderland India has lost one of the greatest of her friends among foreigners. He died in August last at the advanced age of 94. To the end of his days he was in possession of an exceptionally alert and active mind, and his thoughts were largely given to Indian matters. He belonged to the Unitarian Church which has many points of resemblance with the Brahmo Samaj founded by the Raja Rammohun Roy. Though a cleric by profession his interests were varied. A man of strong faith, to him the newer discoveries of science appeared more and more to point to a benevolent purpose shaping the cosmos. His services for India are too well known to need any mention. He was an old contributor of ours, and we had the pleasure of publishing his last article to our journal only a few months ago. The reactions to the news of his death in the Indian papers bear ample evidence to the love and esteem in which he was held by the Indians. We deeply mourn his loss and offer our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family. May his soul rest in peace!

### SRI RAMAKRISHNA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

#### MUZAFFARPUR

Sri Ramakrishna Centenary was celebrated in July last at Samastipur and Bettiah. At the latter place, among other things, the programme included a procession and a religious conference. The procession which was the largest of its kind ever organized at that town, was joined by thousands of people of all castes and denominations. Two well-decorated and heavily garlanded photos of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda mounted upon a caparisoned tusker followed by three more elephants and half a dozen chargers, were placed in the front of the procession. This was followed by a number of Kirtan parties which, with placards containing various kinds of mottos, kept singing religious and devotional songs all along. A band of sepoys belonging to the Bettiah Raj brought up the rear.

At the religious conference the different faiths were represented and there were lec-

tures on Sikhism, Islam, Christianity, Arya Samaj and Sanatana Dharma. Swami Megheswarananda spoke at the conference on Sanatana Dharma. His speech was greatly appreciated by the audience.

#### JESSORE

Sri Ramakrishna Centenary was celebrated in July last at Jessore. In the morning a big procession was organized which paraded all the principal thoroughfares of the town terminating at the pavillion specially arranged for the purpose. Before the procession dispersed, Swami Sambuddhananda of the Belur Math who went there on special invitation, addressed it for about an hour on the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and the Centenary movement. At noon Daridra Narayanas were sumptuously fed.

In the evening a public meeting was held at the Town Hall, Mr. K. C. Nag, Barrister-at-Law, District and Sessions Judge, presiding. The meeting was largely attended and the Hall was packed to its utmost capacity. Swamiji addressed the gathering and his speech created a profound impression upon the audience.

#### TAMLUK

Under the joint auspices of the Tamluk and Panshkura Ramakrishna Centenary Celebrations Committees four public meetings were held in June last at four different villages within the jurisdiction of the Panshkura Thana. Swami Sundarananda went there in connection with the work of the Centenary to address those meetings on different subjects relating to the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. The first meeting was held at Purushottampur at which about one thousand people assembled. Swamiji addressing the meeting on the "Synthesis of All Religions" emphasized its far-reaching effect on bringing about unity between different races and nations. Swami Vishokatmananda spoke on the catholicity of the teachings of the Master, illustrating his lecture by lantern slides. Both the Swamis addressed the second public meeting, held at the Panshkura High School compound and presided over by Mr. D. N. Dhar, Asst. District Engineer. The theme of their discourse at this meeting was, "Every faith is a path to God." The



third meeting addressed by the Swamis, was organized at the village Chapada. About one thousand people attended the meeting and listened with rapt attention to the interesting discourse of the speakers. The fourth meeting was held at the Kolaghat Bazaar and it was attended by about 1,500 people. At this meeting the Swamis spoke on Hinduism. The merchants of the Bazaar took great interest in organizing the meeting. Besides, Swami Sundarananda addressed two students' meetings, one held at the Hamilton High School, Tamluk, and the other at the Deolia Board M. E. School. At the first meeting the subject of his discourse was, "Education and Brahmacharya", and at the second "Vivekananda and Student Community."

#### BERHAMPUR

Swami Ghanananda of the Belur Math visited Berhampur to help the local public in organizing the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary. He spoke on Sri Ramakrishna and Ramakrishna Centenary at a public meeting held at the Berhampur Town Hall in August last. The Swami dwelt at length on the inspiring life and teachings of the great prophet of modern India and explained to the audience the programme and scheme of the Centenary. The meeting was attended by a representative gathering which included many leading gentlemen, advocates, and officials.

A local committee has been formed with Rao Saheb M. V. Apparao, Mr. Janaki Rao Pantulu, Prof. G. Dharma Rao (Secretary), Prof. Y. Ramamurty, and Messrs. W. V. Sarma, R. V. Ramanamurty, and L. Panigrahi. The Committee has already started collection for the Central Centenary Fund.

#### SAMASTIPUR

The celebration of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary passed off peacefully in July last at Samastipur. The programme which extended over three days, consisted of, among other things, a procession, the feeding of the poor, and a public meeting.

The Centenary was inaugurated on the 14th of July last with a procession which was brought out with the photos of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda seated in two well-decorated motor cars in the front, and followed by five local Kirtan parties and about two thousand people. The procession paraded the main roads of the town. On the following day, there was a religious con-

ference at the local H. E. School, a Moulavi spoke on Islam, a Christian missionary on Christianity, and Swami Megheswarananda on Sanatana Dharma. On the third day another meeting was held at the same place and the Swamiji spoke on the life and teachings of the Master. The first Munsiff presided over both the meetings.

#### KURNOOL

The Centenary celebrations of the birthday of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa commenced on the 17th of July last in the Town Hall, when Swami Siddheswaranandaji of the Ramakrishna Mission, Bangalore, performed Guru Poojâ, followed by prayers and Bhajana. Thereafter, the Swami gave a talk on some of the important events in the life of Sri Ramakrishna. A public meeting was held in the Town Hall, presided over by Dewan Bahadur V. N. Viswanatha Rao, M.A., B.L., District Collector. Dr. Varada Aiyar, L. M. S., District Medical Officer and President of the Centenary Celebrations Committee, in a short speech, requested the President to unveil the portraits of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda presented by Mr. A. Seshagiri Rao, B.A., B.L., retired Sub-Judge. The President paid an eloquent tribute to the greatness of the Master and his illustrious disciple and said that they were the twinstars in the religious firmament of modern times. After the singing of hymns, Swami Siddheswarananda delivered an impassioned address on "Ramakrishna Paramahansa, his life and message". The Master's great legacy to modern India, he said, was the service of the poor, in a spirit of love and dedication, which is the guiding motto of the Sannyasias of the Order of Sri Ramakrishna. Nawab Bahadur Yar Jung Bahadur, in an eloquent Urdu speech, pointed out that the life and teachings of the saint were in tune with the precepts of Islam and quoted a beautiful verse in Urdu in support of it. Brahmasri Subramania Sastrulu also spoke on the life of Sri Ramakrishna. Nicely printed Centenary Souvenirs were distributed to the audience.

On the 19th of July last, a public meeting was held in the Town Hall, when Mr. K. M. Krishna Kurup, B.A., B.L., District Judge, presided. Swami Siddheswarananda of Bangalore, delivered an address on "Sri Ramakrishna and the New Alignment of Life". Messrs. G. Siva Rao, B.A., L.T., Dawood Khan Khaleel, B.A., B.L., and Dr. D. S. John also spoke pointing out that

Sri Ramakrishna's message was of a universal character. The President exhorted the citizens to imbibe the spirit of the great Master and translate it in their daily lives.

As part of the programme, Swami Siddheswarananda addressed a gathering of ladies in the premises of the Mahilā Samāj, when Mrs. Janaki Nayar, B.A., presided. The Swami succinctly narrated the main incidents in the life of the Holy Mother and the love and regard Sri Ramakrishna had for women whom he used to call Avatārs of the Divine Mother. Miss B. Pankajam, B.A., L.T. translated the speech into Telugu.

There was a big procession in the night when the decorated pictures of the Paramahansa and Vivekananda were carried through the main streets.

#### COIMBATORE

On the 19th of July last the Birth Centenary celebrations were organized by some of the prominent gentlemen of the place. In the morning about 4,000 to 5,000 poor people were fed in the premises of the Koniamman temple. A portrait of Sri Ramakrishna was taken out in procession.

A public meeting was held in the evening in the Town Hall with Swami Chidbhavananda of Ooty in the chair. Mr. N. M. R. Subbaraman of Madura, Srimathi V. K. Chinnamalu Ammal and Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar, M. L. A., spoke on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Prizes were then distributed by the president for an essay competition held for students in connection with the celebrations.

With a vote of thanks proposed by Mr. K. Nanjundiah, and with the distribution of Prasadam the function came to a close.

#### THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE, BENARES

##### REPORT FOR 1935

During the year under report the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Benares, stepped into the thirty-fifth year of its useful existence. Since its very inception it has engaged itself in the service of all classes of people—the sick and the poor, the helpless and the invalid, irrespective of caste, creed or nationality. The expansion of the institution from its most humble beginnings to its present position of many-branched activities bears eloquent testimony to the worth and importance of the institution. The extensive nature as well as the many-sided character of its activities will be apparent

from the following brief résumé of its activities in 1935.

**Indoor Work :** It is carried under several heads. (i) Indoor General Hospital has 145 beds altogether. The total number of patients treated in 1935 was 1,636, the total number of surgical cases treated in the Indoor Hospital was 365, most of which were major cases. All the three systems of medicine, namely, Allopathic, Homœopathic, and Ayurvedic were taken recourse to according to the choice and necessity of the patients. (ii) The refuge for the aged and invalid men has 25 beds for poor invalids who having come to Benares for spending their last days become stranded and financially helpless. Want of funds permitted the keeping of only four permanent inmates during the year. (iii) The refuge for the aged and invalid women had 8 inmates during the year. The Sevashram has undertaken the construction of a building at a cost of Rs. 40,000 for making an extension of this refuge. (iv) The refuge for paralytic patients make special arrangement for their treatment. Eleven paralytic cases were accommodated during the year. (v) The Chandri Bibi Dharamsala Fund gave 171 men and women food and shelter. There being no separate house the recipients were mostly accommodated in the invalid wards.

**Outdoor Work :** (i) Outdoor Dispensaries. The total number of new patients treated was 51,846 and the number of repeated cases was 93,473. These include the patients who were treated at the branch Outdoor Dispensary of the Home, at Shivala. Taking together the figures of both the Dispensaries the daily average attendance was 398. The total number of surgical cases was 581. (ii) Outdoor help to poor invalids and helpless ladies of respectable families. Under this head 193 persons received weekly and monthly outdoor relief and the total expenditure incurred was Rs. 2,686-12-3 in cash and 130 mds. 17 srs. 4 chts. of rice and flour, besides blankets and clothings. The recipients were generally helpless men and women of respectable families, whose social position forbade them from resorting to open begging. (iii) Special and occasional relief. Under this head 1,068 persons were given help in the shape of either books for students, food for stranded travellers or similar relief as occasion demanded.

**Finance :** Total receipts and disbursements during the year were Rs. 59,196-5-8 and Rs. 73,809-15-10 respectively.

A new laboratory, the Tincowri Memorial Laboratory, was opened during the year, thanks to the generous endowment by Sj. Rajendra Nath Chatterji of Hooghly.

The immediate needs of the Home are:

(i) Endowments for beds for the sick and the invalid. The cost of endowing a bed for the sick is Rs. 3,000 and for the invalid Rs. 2,500.

(ii) Bedding and clothing.

(iii) An Invalids' Home for Women.

### RAMKRISHNA MISSION FAMINE AND FLOOD RELIEF WORK

The distress due to famine and flood in the country is reaching a critical stage. Recently one of our workers visited some of the famine-affected areas and the report he gives of the condition of the people beggars all description. Hundreds of men, women and children are crowding at our relief centres daily with agonies of hunger. Women are appearing in many cases with half-naked bodies. In the areas allotted to us, we have greatly increased the number of recipients. The fact will be apparent from the statistics for the third week of this month given below.

#### FAMINE RELIEF

##### KHULNA DISTRICT

During the period 127 Mds. 7 Srs. of rice were distributed from the Gabura, Jhapa and Nakipur centres among 2,413 recipients.

##### BANKURA DISTRICT

From the Joyrambati centre of the Bankura district 1,212 persons received 45 Mds. 34 Srs. of rice, and 40 cloths were also distributed amongst the most needy.

Relief was also given during the week from Barjora and Pakhanna centres of the district.

##### BIRBHUM DISTRICT

At the Lakshmbati centre of the Birbhum district the number of persons relieved were 794, and the quantity of rice distributed was 89 Mds. 27 Srs.

From the Mashra centre of the same district, 47 Mds. 2 Srs. of rice and maize were distributed among 899 recipients.

##### MIDNAPORE DISTRICT

From the Chaulkhola centre of the district 240 recipients received 12 Mds. 3 Srs. of rice during the week.

### FLOOD RELIEF

#### MALDA DISTRICT

From the Jhowbona centre 80 Mds. of rice and maize were distributed.

#### CAWNPORE DISTRICT

Our workers from the Cawnpore centre are giving relief in co-operation with the Central Relief Committee, Cawnpore.

#### ARAKAN DIVISION

For the week ending the 29th August the Mission workers in Arakan have distributed 490 Mds. of rice from the Gangadaw, Kyankin, Thitpon, Cheduba and Honwa centres. Some hut-building materials were also distributed.

The famine condition is getting from bad to worse daily, and unless relief measures are greatly increased, many will fall victims to death. In some areas heavy rains have aggravated the misery of the people still further. We have already informed the generous public that we are greatly handicapped for want of funds. But the work has to be continued for about two months more. We, therefore, appeal to the generous public again to contribute to our funds. We beg to acknowledge with thanks the following notable contributions to the above funds:

	Rs.	A.
Dr. M. N. Sarkar, Bilaspur ...	160	0
Presidency College Famine Relief Committee, Calcutta ...	300	0
Through C. Kailasham, Esq., F.M.S. ...	50	0
Kumar Brindaban Chandra Law, Calcutta ...	100	0
Through Swami Sivaswarupananda, Belur Math ...	50	0
R. L. Ghose, Esq., Monghyr ...	84	4
Ladies of Midnapore ...	50	0
Telegraph Institute, Calcutta ...	135	0

Further contributions will be thankfully received and duly acknowledged at any of the following addresses.

- (1) The President, Ramkrishna Mission,  
Belur Math, P.O., Dt. Howrah.
- (2) The Manager, Advaita Ashrama,  
4, Wellington Lane, Calcutta.  
(Sd.) SWAMI MADHAVANANDA  
Acting Secretary  
21-9-36

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

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## AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF SISTER NIVEDITA

HOUSE OF RETREAT OF THE SISTERS OF BETHANY, LONDON

October 3, 1901.

Miss—

The inscription which heads this letter will sufficiently explain to you where I am, for a week's retreat.

This is an Anglican, not a Roman, sisterhood and so everything is in English instead of Latin, and there is a certain reserve and self-restraint from great emotion, which is most beautiful to me. And yet the whole life is like a great office of prayer, so that the very stones of the walls seem full of the beautiful influence of peace and the thought of God.

The Guest Mistress tells me that the Community is one of the strictest in the matter of devotion and it greatly delights me to find that it by no means exceeds the Holy Mother's round of devotions. They begin at 6 o'clock and the last service of the day ends at half past nine, and when all the services are counted up it makes about 4½ hours of public worship daily, besides, of course, private prayer.

Then I find that in the matter of food they are a great deal more practical than one would have dreamt of as desirable. They say work and meditation cannot be done on nothing and I dare not send a meal away for one is immediately hunted down for not eating enough ! I do not imagine that they are as wise as the East on this point. Still it is most interesting.

And then if I could only show you the cleanliness and order ! It is marvellous ! Floors, china, walls, windows, all shine as if the very soul of

enthusiasm had been at work on them. How do they achieve this? There seems to be nine to twelve young servants in the house. So there is abundance of help, but they are apparently different from any servants that one ever knew. Neither palaces nor workhouses have I ever seen that could compare with this.

Do you think that I do not know that the great message of Swami is unique? That I could never forget, but beyond that I do not understand. For all this year I have been going through experiences that lie far outside his course for me.

I have held so hard to Sri Ramakrishna that while that if at any point I have been wrong, I can only count it His fault, not mine. And yet it may well be that the place it is all to take in my future life is to be that of warning or even sorrow. . . . I cannot tell. It is not necessary to understand. It is only necessary to be faithful and I have done my best.

It has seemed to me a part of all this that I have had these new views of India and that I could not otherwise have reached them, though, again, how they are to be made widely available I cannot even guess, nor indeed if they are ever to be of any consequence at all.

And I am dying down into a feeling of greater quiet than I have ever had. Is this a part of the preparation? It may be that it marks the decline of efficiency beyond the climax but again, if so, it is Mother's fault. I did my best: she takes what she will.

Only your friend is *not* right about India's requiring foreign rule. Does the history of India bear the statement out? Of course not. Even as written by her enemies it shows that India, as large as Western Europe, never suffered from such disorder. Think of the wars between France and England alone, between England and Spain, between Germany and France, of the French Revolution; of the wars of Succession in every country: of the brigand raids of large communities into small! Nothing is so extraordinary in India as the combination of intense religious conviction with marvellous political peacefulness, when one takes a large enough view of the situation, to get the facts at a true focus. The only thing that never is written is good *history*, at least about India, that I do understand.

Mr. Tata told me that when Swami was in Japan everyone who saw him was immediately struck by his likeness to Buddha.

Have you thought what that great legend of the Dalai-Lama really means? How it means that one cannot pass onward to the Altar while one child stands begging for bread with tears in the way? And have you realized how that *looks* like turning from God, when you are really only turning from your own salvation and holiness? And have you thought how the world only imagined that it cried for *daily* bread and only the great soul of the Buddha knew that it was the bread of Life?

Oh I see that child always in the way, and his need is dearer to me than any realization. I will not go onwards till he goes before me, but do not think for one moment that I forget that what he really wants is the Sacramental Presence.

As I watch this marvellous round of brooding love here, I feel what would I not give to establish such an engine of intensest force and dedicate it to the Freedom of Man. I see no details yet, but someday I hope it may come to me to write another little book like *Kâli* and call it Freedom.

I say nothing of plans, because as yet they seem so doubtful. I want to get to Swami and the Holy Mother. All my wishes are summed up in that one longing. So meanwhile, as I cannot settle, but must wait to be shown, I do my best to write and write and thus accomplish the immediate duty. Love.

## INDIAN INDIVIDUALISM AND THE MODERN AGE

BY THE EDITOR

### I

Individualism is as a rule associated with the theory of government according to which the welfare of the State consists in the well-being and free initiative of the constituent members. It is often contrasted with collectivism and various forms of socialism which subordinate the individual to the community. It originated from the doctrine of *laissez faire* that arose in the eighteenth century. The doctrine was based on both economic and political propositions. In the political field, it assumed the garb of individualism under its powerful exponent, Jeremy Bentham whose philosophy supported by other thinkers practically swayed the political institutions of the West in the nineteenth century. His arguments were: "Since every person is the best judge of his own happiness, the more free he is left in his search for its attainment, the more certain he is to reach it; and since each man is equally entitled to happiness, all artificial barriers imposed by government in the way of its realization are necessarily evil." The philosophy reached its climax and exerted its influence till about 1870 A. D.

The principle based as it was on economic and political grounds afforded facilities for unrestricted competition to individuals. It made an individual vigorous in the struggle for existence and also highly efficient in conducting affairs of the world. The

individual initiative and enterprise were left unhampered to the extent of the security of the State. But on the other hand, the individual instincts of self-preservation, acquisitiveness, combativeness, and desire for power and adulation grew so much unrestrained that they became extremely selfish and dominant. The destructive instincts of individuals reigned supreme and people more or less lost the qualities of altruistic and constructive character. A huge number of inequalities, tyrannies, dominations, and injustices made the vast majority of mankind unhappy and miserable. As events went on, terrible reactions set in. They gave birth to a number of social philosophies to counteract the evils of individualism. The value of individualism as giving stimulation to production and invention was ruthlessly criticized because of its wastes and failures in bringing about an equitable distribution of the product. The comforts and luxuries of a handful of individuals at the expense of the teeming millions could not be tolerated any longer. Thus, the rightfulness of individualism could not rest on economic considerations. It lost its ground in the political sphere also, because of the inequalities in the distribution of the sacrifices of war and those in matters of justice, liberty, and opportunity to the overwhelming majority. So, it is obvious that individualism had to die a natural death

even in the spheres in which it was born. It might have proved a safe avenue to human progress, had it possessed a tempering principle behind. A tempering principle is possible only where it admits of a wide philosophy of life and a broad understanding of the spiritual unity of every man. Herbert Hoover, a writer on *American Individualism*, observes while dwelling upon the spiritual phases on which a higher kind of individualism should depend as great motive forces behind the principle: "Our social and economic system cannot march toward better days unless it is inspired by things of the spirit. It is here that the higher purposes of individualism must find their sustenance. Men do not live by bread alone. Nor is individualism merely a stimulus to production and the road to liberty; it alone admits the universal inspiration of every human soul. I may repeat that the divine spark does not lie in agreements, in organizations, in institutions, in masses or in groups. Spirituality with its faith, its hope, its charity, can be increased by each individual's own effort. And in proportion as each individual increases his own store of spirituality, in that proportion increases the idealism of democracy." Thus it is clear that the doctrine of individualism if it be taken not in its restricted sense but in the sense of an all-round development of human personality can add to the progress of man, both individual and collective.

In India, we do not find the type of individualism that is rampant in the West but a type which is distinctly Indian and in which an individualist could be an altruist with a cosmopolitan outlook in heart and mind. The social and religious organizations of India always discourage and prevent the growth of individualism of the type of the West. We shall now trace the deve-

lopment of Indian individualism in and through the social and religious institutions of India.

## II

The cardinal doctrine of Indian philosophy is that all men are not only equal in essence but divine at the same time. It has so much permeated the consciousness of the Indian masses that in spite of various distinctions of caste, creed, and colour they never give up the philosophical basis of their outlook. The unity of the Self so much stressed in the *Upanishads*, the highest of the Indian scriptures, has made a permanent impression on Indian character, manners, and institutions. This has really laid the foundation of Hindu ethics, which consists in the development of human personality. The manifestation of the Self is regarded as the only criterion of a man's moral perfection. The ideal of ethical pursuits is to transcend the limits of ethics and to lead the soul from an ego-centric sphere to a vast, cosmopolitan realm of thought and activity. The moral sense of the Hindu law-givers is keen to point out its limitations and in their books we find many passages and instances in which a smaller good has been condemned in place of a greater and legitimate one, and emphasis has always been laid on the principle of self-manifestation more than on conformity to rigid and artificial injunctions. In the *Māhābhārata* we find passages like the following:

"If by slaying a single individual a family may be saved, or if by slaying a single family the whole kingdom may be saved, such an act of slaughter is no transgression. Sin, O King, sometimes assumes the form of virtue, and virtue sometimes assumes the form of sin. They, however, that are learned, know which is which." Again, "The friends of humanity, by doing even acts of

cruelty, have attained to high heaven. Righteous Kshatriyas, by doing even sinful acts, have attained to blissful ends. The Brāhmana, by taking up arms on three occasions, does not incur sin, namely, for defending himself, for compelling men of other castes to do their duties, and for chastizing robbers." The idea is very popular among the Hindus that one has to sacrifice the individual for the family, the family for the community, the community for the country, and the whole world for the soul. The Hindu ethics is thus made subservient to the demands of the spirit.

In practical religion, the Hindus do not enforce joint worship either at home or in the temples and monasteries. Every man must practise religion according to his beliefs, temperament, and inclinations. Here also the expansion of the individual self has been stressed more than the mechanical observance of forms and dogmas. This is why we find in Hinduism an apparent medley of ceremonies, rituals, images, scriptures, doctrines, and modes of worship or contemplation of the Divine. Sir S. Radhakrishnan rightly points out in his *Hindu View of Life*: "Hinduism requires every man to think steadily on the life's mystery until he reaches the highest revelation. While the lesser forms are tolerated in the interests of those who cannot suddenly transcend them, there is all through an insistence on the larger idea and purer worship. Hinduism does not believe in forcing up the pace of development. When we give our higher experiences to those who cannot understand them we are in the position of those who can see and who impart the visual impressions to those born blind. Unless we open their spiritual eyes, they cannot see what the seers relate. So while Hinduism does not interfere with one's natural way of

thinking, which depends on his moral and intellectual gifts, education and environment, it furthers his spiritual growth by lending a sympathetic and helping hand wherever he stands. While Hinduism hates the compulsory conscription of men into the house of truth, it insists on the development of one's intellectual conscience and sensibility to truth." Here we find the necessity of individualism in religion, although we appreciate much the need of congregational worship, some forms of which are often seen in Hindu Kirtans, Kathakalās, Pujās, and various religious festivals of India.

Then again, Indian charity is not organized and much criticism is levelled against it on that ground. The principle behind Indian charity is to elevate one's soul by coming face to face with actual sufferings and trying to alleviate them. The giver in this case wants to be benefited by not looking at the needy in the eyes of mercy but in the spirit of feeling oneness with them. This is the reason why we find in India the dearth of alms-houses, and we find few people directing banks to pay monthly sums to the poor and the destitute. It is said that Sir N. G. Chandavarkar once asked a band of Sannyāsins in India why they do not take to work and have their wages, and the significant reply the former received was that their duty was to keep alive the sentiments of charity in the country. This is, of course, no plea for increasing the number of beggars in India. This is only to point out the spirit of charity as prevalent in India. Nor do we depreciate the work and need of charitable institutions either in India or in the West. Everybody knows that in Western countries there is no dearth of private charity side by side with their



big charitable institutions. The fact is that charity as a principle of widening one's own self should be a sacred and religious affair, as such the more it is done in actual contact with the living truth, the better for the individual and society too. This is why in Hindu households men and women like to feed and serve the poor personally instead of donating a sum for the purpose and thus depriving themselves of worshipping God in those forms or realizing the Self that pervades all, by means of that service.

### III

The Hindu systems of caste and the joint family appear at the first sight to have suppressed the natural growth of an individual. But the principles behind the *original plan* were sober and sound, they minimized the dangers of competition in society and family, and prevented the growth of economic individualism as found in the West. The reflections on caste as made by A. H. Benton, I.C.S. in his recent writing on the subject give us an idea of what an English officer thinks of the services rendered by the caste system : "It undoubtedly gives great stability not only to the Hindu population but to the country as a whole, which must be affected by the staid character of the principal mass. It adds greatly to the general contentment. Every one is pleased with and proud of his caste; no one would part with it on any account. It may well be said that no man in any country has more friends in need than Indian castemen. All the men of the caste, it may be considered, are their brothers' keepers. This is a most important matter in a country so widely extended and with such an immense population as India. . . . Caste rules generally pay fair regard to good morals and some are specially

designed to promote morality." The exclusive claims and privileges reigning in the subsequent period of the original caste system have divided the Hindus, one group from another and the system has ceased to function properly. But if the system can be restored on its original plan, India may save herself from the cramping influences of the present-day economic organizations. The original plan was to raise the lower classes up to the level of the higher. Therefore the system was at the very beginning intended for helping the different members of the social organism. Unfortunately for India, the system has now degenerated into a hotbed of quarrelling castes.

The joint family system was also conceived to aid and support old and infirm persons, orphans, widows, and other dependants of similar nature. The aim was to develop the honour and prestige of a family by individual character and resources. As a result of the system, many good families flourished and they elevated the community to which they belonged. But now the system has dwindled in recent times due to modern competition.

Then there is the conception of the four stages of life, namely, the life of a student aspiring after character by means of discipline under an expert guide; secondly, the period of work under a regulated, married life with all the duties of a householder; thirdly, the period of retreat in a forest with contemplation of the Divine and relaxation of the social bonds; fourthly, the period of renunciation solely devoted to individual freedom and service of man. These were considered to be so many path-ways leading an individual to the ultimate goal of life. The pursuits of Dharma or duty, Artha or wealth, Kâma or desire for material

happiness were recognized as legitimate human endeavours. So we see that no aspect of individual life was set at naught, although the aim of all was to secure collective good through personal and altruistic motives.

#### IV

The course open to India at the critical period of the conflicting tendencies of the modern times is to keep close to her age-long traditions of individualism peculiar to the genius and talents of the Indian people. At the same time she must adapt herself to the new environments by assimilating the good points of the Western nations. The good points are concerted action for a noble cause, the co-ordination of wills for the same, and the power of organized efforts for the freedom of individuals, both secular and spiritual. The Indians need badly to imbibe the spirit of collaboration in these days when nothing big on a large scale can be done without it.

The spirit of acting concertedly for the common good of all was not absent even in the hoary past of India. In the *Rigveda*, X. 191 3, 4 we come across some lines of a memorable verse which bear out the statement: "Common be your prayer; common be your end; common be your purpose; common be your deliberation. Common be your desires; unified be your hearts; united be your intentions; perfect be the union amongst you." We have mentioned before that the principle behind Indian individualism always aims at the good of the world side by side with the attainment of one's ultimate goal of life. To carry out the principle in these days, the Indians must learn to combine in all organized efforts that are directed towards the well-being of society.

The ancient institutions of caste, village community, and joint family

were based on the substitution of co-operation for competition. They have now been seriously affected by the competitive principle of the modern age and so they have ceased to serve the useful purposes that they did before. It is now the duty of the Indians to reform and adapt them to their present-day needs. The reformation of the institutions is only possible if the people of India can give up their age-long attitude of drift and despair and seriously organize themselves in the work of regenerating their good and noble institutions. Social and national drawbacks can hardly be removed by the efforts of a few individuals. It is foolish to think that things will right themselves without concerted action and adventure. "Therefore to make a great future India", said Swami Vivekananda, "the whole secret lies in organization, accumulation of power, co-ordination of wills. Already before my mind rises one of the marvellous verses of the Atharva Veda Samhita which says, 'Be thou all of one mind, be thou all of one thought, for in the days of yore, the gods being of one mind were enabled to receive oblations. That the gods can be worshipped by men is because they are of one mind.' Being of one mind is the secret of society. And the more you go on fighting and quarrelling about all trivialities such as 'Dravidian' and 'Aryan', and the question of Brâhmins and non-Brâhmins and all that, the further you are off from that accumulation of energy and power which is going to make the future India. For mark you, the future India depends entirely upon that. This is the secret, accumulation of will-power, co-ordination, bringing them all, as it were, into one focus."

India can stand on her own legs, if she can organize her own institutions after adapting them to the needs of the modern age. The principle of Indian

individualism must be combined with the modern spirit of organized motive and action to the ultimate good and all-

round development of individual life and at the same time to the progress of human society as a whole.

## KNOWLEDGE AND LIBERATION

BY PROF. NALINI KANTA BRAHMA, M.A., P.R.S., PH.D.

According to the Vedānta, Knowledge dispels Ignorance and removes the three-fold miseries of life that have their source in Ignorance. Such Knowledge results from the hearing of the sacred texts and from ratiocination and meditation on those texts. It is seen, however, that many learned men who have committed to memory the sacred texts through constant practice and have spent their entire lives in acquiring the meaning and significance of those texts through reasoning and argumentation fail to attain that Knowledge which emancipates man from the clutches of misery. A serious problem now arises : How can it be held that knowledge resulting from the hearing of the sacred texts removes Ignorance and bestows Liberation in the face of the fact mentioned above—viz. that Ignorance and Bondage persist even after the knowledge of the sacred texts with their meaning and significance?

In order to answer the difficulty, we have to consider fully the nature of the false Superimposition (*Adhyâsa*) that is caused by Ignorance or Nescience and also the real character of the process of correction (*Bâdha*) of the error. When a piece of rope is taken to be a snake, the snake is felt to be perceived directly as an immediate presentation in front of the subject, and although there is no contact of the sense-organ with the snake, still what is known as the snake is felt as something *given* or presented and not as something which is merely remembered. The illusory perception

of the snake is as direct and immediate as any correct perception of the snake, and as a process of perception it has all the characteristics of correct perception and does not in any way differ from it.

It is sometimes said that illusion differs from correct perception in one important respect, viz. that whereas the object is absent in illusion, it is present in perception. But this cannot be maintained. So long as the illusion lasts, the object is perceived to be present and there is no consciousness of the absence of the object. The existence of the object is inferred from the consciousness of it and as in the state of the illusory appearance, there is the consciousness of the snake, the existence of the snake is also known. So long as the illusion lasts, there is no knowledge of the absence of the object and hence the illusion cannot be distinguished from correct perception by means of that criterion, viz. the absence of the object.

It may of course be held that although the absence of the object cannot be determined during the persistence of the illusion, still when the illusion is corrected by the opposing experience, it is known that the object is non-existent. So long as the snake is illusorily perceived, it is true that it is not known to be an illusion. But as soon as the rope is perceived, the illusory character of the snake that previously appeared to be real is clearly recognized. But this contention also is not true. From the mere fact that

now the rope is perceived in place of the snake, it cannot be held that the snake is unreal and that the rope is real. It is true that previously there was the perception of the snake and now there is the perception of the rope. The two experiences contradict each other. The object before me cannot both be a snake and a rope. But that both the snake and the rope were presented and experienced as given facts cannot also be denied. As presentations both have got the same characteristics, and there is no reason why reality should be ascribed to one of them and it should be denied to the other. There is no means of determining which of them is real. As the subsequent experience contradicts the previous one, so also the previous experience contradicts the subsequent one. If contradiction or opposition is the only reason for the rejection of the previous experience, then the subsequent experience may also be rejected on the same ground. Priority or posteriority again cannot determine the reason for the rejection. The illusory experience may precede as well as succeed the correct perception. Dreams may succeed the experiences of the waking state, but the mere fact that they come *after* the experiences of the waking state cannot prove that they are real while the waking experiences which are contradictory to them are unreal. Again, as the two experiences, viz. one of the snake and the other of the rope, happen in two different points of time and not simultaneously, both of them might also be taken to be real. It may be supposed that while the subject perceived a snake, really a snake was there. But now the snake has disappeared and the subject is perceiving a piece of rope before him. So it cannot be held that merely from the present perception of the rope in place of the previous per-

ception of the snake it can be inferred that the snake was non-existent and false or unreal.

To realize that the perception of the snake is illusory, the subsequent perception of the rope is not enough. Something else is needed for the genuine correction of the error. I see a snake before me in dim light; I become terrified and run away. Then a person comes to me and says that what I saw was not a snake but a piece of rope. But this does not remove my fear. I *saw* a snake but now I *hear* that it was not a snake. Knowledge that is derived from direct perception cannot be superseded by knowledge derived indirectly from testimony or authority. It is for this reason that although we learn from *Sruti* or the *Vedas* that our self is identical with the Absolute or Brahman and is thus absolutely free from all sorts of misery, still our misery and bondage which we directly perceive are not removed through the knowledge gained from the Vedic texts. The error that creeps in through direct perception cannot be removed by anything short of another direct perception. But even a mere contradictory percept i.e. an opposing perceptual experience is not sufficient to correct the previous perceptual error or illusion. Even when a lamp is brought to the place where I perceived the snake and in clear light I now see that there is nothing but a rope, still my fear may not be removed. I still may think that there *was* really a snake but now it has disappeared. I am not sure that what previously appeared as a snake is really this piece of rope before me; but so long as this identity and continuity between the object of illusion and the object of correct perception cannot be established, the illusion cannot be understood to be an illusion and there cannot be any correction of it. In

order that such identity and continuity may be established, it is necessary that I should have not only two such contradictory percepts as those of the snake and the rope on two different occasions, but I should also have to see how the piece of rope looks like the snake that I actually saw, when presented in dim light. I have to see the object before me in clear light and perceive that it is a piece of rope; I have to see it again immediately after in the absence of clear light and perceive that now it looks like a snake. I may again see it in clear light and perceive it as a piece of rope. This process may be repeated several times or rather as many times as are necessary. When I have been convinced that the very same object which is perceived as a piece of rope in clear light looks like a snake when seen in dim light or in darkness, I clearly realize that my previous perception of the object as a snake was an illusion. It is only when the identity and continuity are fully established that the illusion is corrected. Two contradictory percepts so long as they remain discontinuous fail to establish the truth or falsity of the one or the other; but when one of them is seen to lead to and be merged in the other, then the persisting experience establishes itself by the negation or sublation of the other.

Here lies the reason why our illusion persists even when we have acquired knowledge of the self through the Vedic texts. The self about which we learn from the *Upanishads*, the self which is identical with Brahman and is eternally free, is not found to be continuous with the self which we perceive in our everyday life. We do not find any connection or rather any continuity between the self with which we are acquainted

and the self which we establish by means of ratiocination and inference or about which we learn from the scriptural texts. Hence the knowledge of self as acquired through *Sravaṇa* (hearing) and *Manana* (ratiocination) is not competent to negate or sublimate our experience of the empirical self which is perceived to be in bondage. What is needed for the purpose is a course of discipline which gradually shows us higher and higher stages of the self beginning from the empirical self with which we are directly acquainted and which ultimately leads us to the knowledge of the self which is Absolute. It is this course of discipline or practical training that establishes the continuity between the empirical self, the 'I' consciousness or the limited finite self on the one hand and the transcendental Self, the Infinite Self or the Brahman on the other. When it is seen that the limited self gradually expands itself and become merged in the Absolute, so to speak, or rather when it is seen that what was previously perceived as limited and thus supposed to be finite is really infinite and absolute, when, in other words, the illusory knowledge of the self is removed and the real character of the self as absolute becomes revealed, then only the primal ignorance disappears and liberation or freedom of the self is clearly recognized. This *Pratyabhijñā* or clear recognition that this limited self is the Absolute or that what is now revealed as the Absolute previously appeared as the limited and finite self, establishes the continuity and identity and securely corrects the error or the illusion. This course of discipline that is essential to this *Pratyabhijñā* or which alone can yield it is thus indispensable to Liberation.

# THE PROBLEM OF SORROW IN HUMAN LIFE

BY PROF. AKSHAYA KUMAR BANERJEA, M.A.

## I. THE UNIVERSAL PROBLEM OF HUMAN LIFE

Sorrow is the hardest fact of universal experience in the animal world. It is through sorrow that all animals, including men, are born. The cries of sorrow are the first expressions of animal life. It is sorrow that goads the living beings to activity. It is through efforts for emancipation from sorrow that there is development in the animal creation. Life begins with sorrow, passes through sorrow and in most cases ends with sorrow. It is as great a fact in the animal world, as motion is in the physical world. Nobody can deny its existence. It is a fact which everybody experiences, but nobody likes to experience.

Philosophers have made various attempts to account for the presence of this unpalatable fact in this universe and to reconcile it with the religious conception of its ultimate ground and cause. But as it is a hopeless task to ascertain why there is the presence of motion or inertia or gravity in the physical world, so it is an equally hopeless task to determine why there is the presence of sorrow in the animal creation. On the other hand, as it is impossible to conceive of a physical cosmos, in which motion, gravity and inertia are altogether absent, so it is impossible to conceive of an animal world, from which sorrow is altogether eliminated. The idea of sorrow is inseparably associated with the very possibility of sensuous life. It is the source of all motives and impulses, all movements and activities, all deve-

lopment and progress in the animal world.

In the normal course of human life, whatever actions men perform, whatever knowledge they seek to attain, whatever wealth, fame and distinction they long for acquiring, whatever relationships they establish and maintain with one another, whatever feelings and emotions they cherish and culture within their heart,—all these owe their origin to the impetus given by sorrow. Every man experiences sorrows on account of his mental and physical constitution and his position in the world system; he naturally seeks and exerts himself for emancipation from all actual and probable sorrows; and as a result of this spontaneous desire and exertion, the powers latent in him are gradually awakened and developed. In search for the means of getting rid of sorrows, he becomes more and more acquainted with the phenomena, the forces and the laws of the world as well as with his own powers and potentialities. The experience of the failure of the earthly resources at his command to cope with the sorrows leads him to seek for some unearthly means, and thereby develops a religious attitude in him. The problem of the absolute emancipation from all possible sorrows gives rise to metaphysical speculation. Thus it is sorrow which is at the root of all the achievements, of which man feels proud.

But it should be remembered that it is not the meek submission to sorrow as an inevitable fact, but the deter-

mined refusal to submit to it and definite resolution to be emancipated from it, which is the foundation of all human progress. Hence the problem of sorrow is not the theoretical problem of how it finds a place in the scheme of the universe, but the practical problem of how we can get rid of it. Sorrow is there to rouse our slumbering powers and faculties, and the awakening of these powers and faculties must end in the killing of sorrow. So long as sorrow is not killed, efforts must continue. The universal problem of human life is how to kill sorrow and attain happiness. Without solving this problem, human life cannot fulfil itself.

## II. AN INQUIRY INTO THE SOURCES OF SORROW

It is to discover some unerring means of emancipation from all actual and possible sorrows that the different systems of religion and philosophy originally got their birth. This attempt to find out a solution of the problem of sorrow led them to an inquiry about the ultimate realities behind and beyond experience and the ultimate plan of the world system. This inquiry created problems after problems, raised doubts after doubts, faced difficulties after difficulties. But no such conclusion with regard to any of the ultimate objects of metaphysical inquiry could be arrived at, that might be accepted as completely free from logical difficulties and that might appeal to the reason of all sections of the human race as the most satisfactory solution of the vital problems of human life. The mysteries of the universe have remained as mysterious as ever. There is no indication that the controversies among the metaphysicians will ever cease.

But emancipation from sorrow is a matter of practical necessity. Attempts

in this direction cannot wait for the solution of the metaphysical problems. Man's religion consists in the systematic endeavour for the solution of this practical problem of sorrow. It is a course of actual self-discipline, a culture of some outlook on life and the world and a cultivation of some feelings and emotions, that may be of practical efficacy for cutting the root of sorrow and making life enjoyable. It is from this pragmatic standpoint that religion is practised by men in general.

Now, in order to find out a sure remedy for sorrow, it is of great practical importance to discover the sources of sorrow on the basis of our general experience. The main cause of our inability to eradicate sorrow is that we make futile attempts to drive away the particular sorrows as they appear, but make no definite attack upon the sources of sorrows in general. What is necessary for solving this practical problem of life is first to make an inquiry into the nature and the sources of the sorrows from which we suffer and then to make systematic efforts to remove them. This inquiry need not, however, lead us into any bewildering metaphysical complications.

## III. THE SOURCES OF SORROWS, INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL

It is evident to all that sorrow as well as happiness is a condition of the mind. Happiness is the agreeable and desirable condition of the mind, while sorrow is the disagreeable and undesirable condition of the mind. It is also a matter of general experience that these conditions of the mind are mostly created and nourished by the circumstances to which the mind is related. As the attention of men is generally directed outwards, they naturally conclude that the favourable and unfavourable circumstances are the sole sources of their happiness and

misery. Herein is a fundamental mistake, and this mistaken view that our happiness and misery are wholly dependent upon the external circumstances is to a considerable extent responsible for many of our sufferings. We shall come to the point afterwards.

The different kinds of circumstances that are found to affect our mind and produce enjoyment or suffering may first be classified into *Internal* and *External*. The internal circumstances are constituted of the particular capacities and propensities, temperaments and dispositions, passions and prejudices, impulses and inclinations, of the mind itself. What is the amount of contribution which these mental circumstances make to the production of happiness and misery, is not adequately estimated by ordinary men for want of proper self-observation and self-judgment.

The external circumstances, again, may be classified into those pertaining to the *bodily system* and those pertaining to *environments*. The bodily constitution, its strength and weakness, health and disease, beauty and deformity, etc., contribute greatly to our pleasure and pain, enjoyment and suffering. The environments may be further divided into *human* and *physical*. The human environments consist of the family, the community, the nation and the mankind in general. The physical environments are constituted of the fauna and the flora, the forces and the phenomena of nature, the conditions of the land and water and air, etc. It is a matter of universal experience that our enjoyments and sufferings greatly depend upon and are produced by the economic, political, cultural and moral conditions of the family, the community, the nation and the human race, to which our life is essentially related, and also the physical conditions like the productivity or sterility of the soil, the sufficiency or

scarcity of food and water, the natural resources of the country, favourable or unfavourable climate, droughts and floods, cyclones, earthquakes, etc.

#### IV. OUR DEPENDENCE UPON THESE CIRCUMSTANCES

Among these different kinds of circumstances, there are some over which we have the power to exercise effective control, there are many over which we feel to have the capacity of exercising different degrees of partial control, and there are many others over which we feel to have no control whatsoever. With regard to those circumstances which we feel to have the power of controlling, fully or partially, we try to adjust them to our requirements for the attainment of happiness and destruction of sorrow. With regard to the others, over which we feel to have no control, we have to adapt ourselves to them and to submit to the unavoidable sufferings, that they produce, with as much calmness and as little murmur as possible. This is how we have to live in this world.

The circumstances in respect of which we feel ourselves helpless are so many and they become sources of suffering so often, that the human life seems destined to suffer much more than to enjoy. It is also to be noted that the minds of men are ordinarily very often haunted and troubled by the thoughts about their sorrows, past, present, and future, about the objects of desire which they do not possess and the undesirable objects which force themselves upon them. Sometimes they imagine, as a result of their previous painful experiences, many sources of sorrows even at times and under circumstances in which there is no actual suffering and no valid ground for apprehending any. This habit of thinking about sorrows, actual and possible, real and imaginary, renders them incapable of undisturbed



enjoyment of the sources of happiness, even when they are present. Thus thoughts and imaginations about sorrows widen the fields of sorrow, create newer and newer occasions for suffering, and make life bitter. The eager and anxious thoughts for getting rid of actual and possible sorrows become themselves fresh sources of sorrow. The problem of sorrow thus becomes more and more acute and insoluble. This is the case with men of the world in general, whether they are outwardly rich and poor, educated or uneducated, holding high positions of power and prestige in the society or holding no such position at all. Men are generally unhappy; how to be relieved of this unhappiness is the crying problem of life.

#### V. DEEPER ANALYSIS OF THE SOURCES OF SORROW

A systematic endeavour for the solution of this problem must be based upon a deeper analysis of the sources of joys and sorrows. It is the general experience that joys and sorrows are produced by what have been called the internal and external circumstances. But this is not quite an accurate statement of what really happens. A deeper reflection convinces us that it is not truly the circumstances, but the ways in which our thought and will react upon the circumstances, that become the real sources of our happiness and misery.

It is found that circumstances, which are outwardly of the same nature, become sources of happiness to some men and of misery to others. One man placed in one set of circumstances thinks himself most fortunate; another man placed in exactly the same set of circumstances thinks himself most unfortunate. Even in the case of the same man, it is found that in different states

of his mind and in different conditions of his thought and will, the same circumstances affect him differently. Hence wider and closer observation and reflection convincingly point out that the powers and directions of our thought and will, our conscious and subconscious dispositions to react upon the circumstances in particular ways, and what we have called the internal circumstances are mainly responsible for our joys and sorrows. It is also obvious that it is over these that we, as rational beings, have got the capacity to exercise the most effective control, and that this capacity can be immensely increased by the practice of systematic self-discipline. In order to emancipate oneself from sorrow, the most pointed attention should be directed to these sources. If we can properly discipline our thought and will, and can form the habit of looking upon and dealing with the circumstances from a suitable point of view, we can make life enjoyable, whatever the outward nature of the circumstances may be.

#### VI. HOW TO MAKE HUMAN ENVIRONMENTS ENJOYABLE

Take the case of the human environments, upon which our happiness and misery so much depend. If a man can create a harmonious relationship between himself and those around him, whether they are members of his family or of his community or of other communities within the nation, or of other nationalities,—his chances of sorrow will be gradually diminished and those of happiness increased. It is the conflicts of men with their environments, the divergences of tastes and interests among men, their inability or unwillingness to tolerate one another's views, behaviours and modes of life, that become the sources of all kinds of miseries

in the human society. We can attempt to remove this discord and establish harmony in three different ways;—first, by having recourse to all possible means at our disposal in the direction of forcing our own views and tastes and interests upon others and demanding that others should mould their views, tastes and behaviours in accordance with what we regard as right and proper; secondly, by moulding our own views and tastes and behaviours in harmony with those of others around us; and thirdly, by the suitable combination of these two methods.

We can adopt the first method only with regard to those who are near about us, who have confidence in us and over whom we can exercise control, whether physical or moral. But in our practical and intellectual life we have to come across innumerable other individuals and societies, whose views, tastes and modes of life produce impressions upon our mind, but who are beyond the reach of our physical or moral powers. Now, if we feel unhappy whenever their views or temperaments or actions are not in accordance with what we have a liking for, occasions for sorrow will rise every now and then. But we have the power to control our own likes and dislikes and to regulate them in such a way that no kinds of differences on the part of others may produce any disagreeable impressions upon our mind. Not only that; we can form such an outlook in our thought and such a disposition in our mind, that what might otherwise be a source of sorrow may become a source of positive joy. The formation of an attitude to like what others like and to feel happy in what gives happiness to others becomes a source of immense happiness and reduces the occasions for sorrow to a minimum.

This does not of course mean that a man should surrender his freedom of

judgment to others, or that he should not protect himself from the attacks of others or even that he should not preach what he knows to be true and point out the real mistakes of his fellow-men. What is meant is this, that he should have a sincere regard for the similar freedom of judgment of others, that even in exercising his right of self-defence he should not bear any grudge or ill will towards others, and that in preaching the truth he should be inspired by a sincere feeling of love and sympathy for his fellow-beings and should not cherish any feeling of hatred or aversion to anybody. If he remembers that this world is a world of diversities, and that in this world the diversities of views and tastes and modes of life are by nature inevitable, the cultivation of this attitude of thought and will does not become so very difficult as it apparently seems to be. A systematic discipline of thought and will and feeling in this direction and a sincere attempt at the sympathetic understanding of the view-points and positions and requirements of others gradually reveal that many of the conflicts and discords from which we suffer are without any real foundation and originate from misunderstanding due to the wrong attitude of mind. The right frame of mind can cure most of the evils in the human society and remove many of the sources of sorrow without any positive efforts for removing them, inasmuch as many of these will be found out to be imaginary and will vanish as soon as true understanding will appear.

#### VII. GET RID OF THE EGOISTIC ATTITUDE AND MANY SOURCES OF SORROW WILL DISAPPEAR

The individualistic and egoistic mentality of the people with regard to happiness and misery is the source of a good deal of misery to them. When

every man is earnest about his own enjoyments, there must necessarily be a conflict of interests, and instead of a harmonious relationship among men there arise competition, antagonism, suspiciousness, maliciousness, vindictiveness, etc., which become sources of much mental suffering to all, without contributing any stable happiness to any. If a man can get rid of this individualistic and egoistic outlook and can form the habit of looking upon things from the wider socialistic and altruistic point of view, his relations with the environments become harmonious, sweet and pleasant. If this socialistic and altruistic outlook becomes through the teachings of the master-minds the prevailing ideal in the human society, and if through sound education and inspiring examples people are taught to value this outlook and trained in the path of the realization of this ideal, the spirit of mutual service and co-operation takes the place of the spirit of competition and antagonism, mutual faith and sincerity take the place of suspiciousness and duplicity, the feelings of sympathy, benevolence, and forgiveness take the place of the feelings of hatred, maliciousness, and vindictiveness. The culture of these virtues, which become more and more spontaneous with the progressive subordination of the egoistic and individualistic mode of thought and will to the socialistic and altruistic viewpoint, is a very practical method of solving the problem of sorrow in human life.

The most effective way of making this viewpoint deep-rooted and almost natural in the mind is to remember constantly and to contemplate deeply that a man is born not of himself nor for himself, that he cannot sustain his existence for a single day without the co-operation and service of others, that he is indebted to the society for whatever he possesses

and whatever he thinks valuable in himself, and that he has really no independent existence apart from the existence of the society. He is to form the habit of bearing in mind that his ego is organically related to the ego of the society, that his self is a particularized manifestation of the social self, and that this is the case with all men, with whom he comes into any kind of relation. He is to imagine that there is one Self immanent in and pervading all the members of the society, to which he belongs. (It is to be noted that the terms Self, Ego, Existence, etc. are not here used in any metaphysical sense and they do not refer to any metaphysical theory or religious dogma.) Such thought produces a sense of unity among all, and a systematic culture of this thought gradually deepens this sense of unity and find spontaneous expressions in the altruistic virtues.

#### VIII. CONTEMPLATION OF UNITY TO BE EMBODIED IN ACTIVE SERVICE

In order that this sense of unity may become a real part of life and may not remain merely in the theoretical region of thought, the contemplation must be supplemented by active service to the members of the society. If thought is not embodied in actual service, it does not become real in life, and hence it cannot give that amount of internal happiness which is expected from the sense of unity and cannot kill the sorrow which is born of the sense of difference and conflict. Mere contemplation of unity becomes to a man of the world merely a matter of fancy and may give a momentary poetic delight. Practical life has to be regulated in accordance with the idealistic thought. If thought and action are disciplined in accordance with the ideal for some time, many sources of sorrow almost unknow-

ingly disappear and many sprigs of joy shoot forth.

Service should necessarily be in such form and to such extent as may be within the capacity of the individual. But in order to gain the desired end from it, viz. to raise the mind higher and higher above the pangs of sorrow and to widen the range of its enjoyment, the *spirit* or attitude of service,—the altruistic or socialistic mode of thought and will—must inspire and guide the mind. With the development of this spirit, to give becomes more pleasurable than to take, to court physical suffering and economic loss for the sake of others becomes a source of far greater, deeper, and more permanent happiness than to make anybody else suffer or incur loss for the sake of any amount of physical comforts of his own. Being such a great source of happiness and effective means of the destruction of sorrow, the cultivation of this sense of unity and this spirit of service is not a cult of sacrifice; it is a cult of higher and deeper and wider enjoyment. By sacrificing the painful narrow egoistic outlook, a man attains a higher and wider joyful ego in its unity with other egos; by sacrificing his petty transitory interests for the good of others, he attains a state of mind in which he gets rid of his own sorrows and enjoys more stable happiness.

#### IX. EGOISTIC FEELINGS AND ACTIONS ARE THE ENEMIES OF HAPPINESS

The feelings of lust and anger, greed and malice, vanity and hatred, suspiciousness and censoriousness, ambition and fear and the like, are generally spoken of as internal enemies. By enemies are meant the enemies of happiness and sources of sorrow. An insight into the nature of these feelings reveals that they are nothing but the egoistic

sensuous propensities, the cravings for their gratification even at the expense of others, and a distrustful and pessimistic attitude of mind concomitant with frustrations and disappointments. These egoistic tendencies create sorrows in all stages. When they get hold of the mind, they create restlessness and disquietude, and thus become sources of sorrow. They find expression in actions, which not unoften consist in struggling and wrestling with obstacles and resisting forces, and thus produce sufferings.

The human and physical environments are in most cases not quite favourable for the satisfaction of these propensities; they generally offer resistance and create obstacles in the way. These obstacles and resistances become strong and formidable in proportion as the egoistic propensities of the one come in conflict with the similar egoistic propensities of others. In many cases, therefore, frustrations and disappointments are inevitable, and these are always sources of acute sufferings. Such experiences, again, produce feelings of apprehensions and uncertainties with regard to the future. The continuity of such feelings naturally creates a distrustful and pessimistic attitude towards all the environments as well as towards human destiny in general. Such an attitude makes the mind unhappy, and not unoften gives rise to the permanently painful idea that the world is really constituted of sorrows and misfortunes,—a 'dreary dungeon' designed for the sufferings of the creatures; the people around as well as the animal and physical surroundings appear to be hostile to our peace and happiness. Thus a spirit of hostility is aroused not only against those who directly come in the way of our self-gratification; but this spirit, having captured the mind, is extended to men in general and to the

world at large. This spirit finds expression in the feelings of anger and antipathy, hatred and fear, malice and vindictiveness, suspiciousness and censoriousness, etc., which always make the mind unhappy and create newer and newer fields and occasions for sufferings.

Even when particular propensities are satisfied, the pleasures arising out of their satisfaction being in most cases transitory and flitting, the passing away of these pleasures again becomes a fresh source of sorrow. The tastes and experiences of the objects and events that give such pleasures, create an attachment to, and strengthen the yearning for, them, and weaken the powers of thought and will to keep this yearning under control. Such attachment, yearning and weakness make life still more unhappy. The net result of the pursuit of the egoistic impulses and the cherishing of the egoistic outlook is weakness, bitterness, fear and despair. This may appear paradoxical, but nevertheless it is a fact, which every man of insight and experience will corroborate. Those who, hoarding wealth, occupying positions of authority and honour, attaining name and fame, become objects of terror and envy to others, are no exceptions to this rule.

#### X. FOR EMANCIPATION FROM SORROW, THOUGHT AND WILL MUST RISE TO HIGHER PLANES

Any attempt at the solution of the problem of sorrow must, therefore, be based upon rising above the egoistic plane of thought and will and exercising restraint upon the egoistic propensities of the mind. In fact these propensities,—these internal enemies of happiness and sources of sorrow,—in the nature of a man are not so very formidable as they appear to be. A man, as a ration-

al being, has an inherent capacity to keep them under control. To the power of earnest and disciplined thought and will they are always found to submit. What is necessary is that thought and will should be inspired by a higher ideal. Thought must look upon things from a higher standpoint, with a wider outlook and an enlightened idea of self-interest; and will must regulate the mental functions and the physical actions in accordance with that thought. If thought and will, being themselves self-disciplined, apply their power earnestly to the discipline of the mind and the body, all those impulses and tendencies, which appear to be part and parcel of human nature, meekly yield to them and obey their dictates.

For the establishment of this legitimate and inherent right of thought and will to control and regulate the egoistic propensities, the conception of the social ego has to be strengthened and placed over the head of the individual sensuous ego, the sense of unity with fellow-brings has to be emphasized and given a greater importance than the sense of difference from them, and the true and permanent interest of the self has to be contemplated as really identical with the good of the society. To be imbued with this ideology, thought will of course have to struggle hard for some time with the egoistic outlook, which is already in possession of it. But without struggle nothing is attainable,—not even the little momentary pain-mixed pleasures, which the lower ego seeks for. The struggle to beat down this egoistic outlook is worth while, inasmuch as every stage of the success, and even of the pursuit, of this struggle is followed by relative emancipation from restlessness, bitterness, weakness and sorrow, and inner enjoyment of calmness, sweetness, strength and happiness.

# XI. THOUGHT AND ACTION MUST GO TOGETHER

But as has been said before, will and action must sincerely follow this thought. Without the co-operation of will and action, thought and emotion cannot permeate the human nature. If will and action go on following the egoistic impulses, and thought alone contemplates this higher ideal and is accompanied by some passing emotions, this ideal can never be real in life. On the other hand, if action only mechanically pursues a course approved and enjoined by the higher ideal under propulsion from a superior authority,—whether social, political or religious,—the mind cannot get rid of restlessness, bitterness, weakness and sorrow, and enjoy the longed-for serenity, sweetness, strength and happiness within. Contemplation and action must go hand in hand in cases of all social beings, to enable them to achieve their end.

When thought, will, and emotion are imbued with the sense of unity with fellow-beings, and actions are performed in the sincere spirit of service to the society, the altruistic feelings of love and friendliness, sympathy and benevolence, charity and forgiveness, modesty and reverence, etc. naturally become stronger and stronger in the mind, and the egoistic propensities and their concomitants almost unconsciously go to the background. The growth of those altruistic feelings makes a man more and more indifferent to and forgetful of even the ordinary necessities of his sensuous life, not to speak of its luxuries and imaginary wants. Thus with the subordination and weakening of the egoistic disposition and outlook, the sources of sorrow gradually diminish, and with the development of the sense of unity with others and the strengthening of the

altruistic attitude of mind, the sources of happiness gradually increase.

# XII. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPTION OF SOCIETY

It is to be borne in mind that the term 'society' has no fixed denotation. The entire range of human environments comes within its scope. In the mind of every individual the idea of the denotation of society varies in proportion to the development of his capacity of thought and will. The family is the smallest unit of society. In the lowest stage of human culture, a man feels the unity of his individual ego with the ego of the family, identifies his interests with the interests of his family, and feels happiness in the employment of his time and energy and in the sacrifice of his physical comforts for the happiness of the members of his family. The domestic life is the primary training ground for the culture of the altruistic feelings and the spirit of service. A man has to control many of his sensuous egoistic impulses and to sacrifice voluntarily many of his individual physical pleasures for the sake of the advancement of the interests of the family. But such self-control and self-sacrifice are generally prompted by natural affections for those with whom there are ties of blood. These natural affections are found almost inseparably mixed up with sensuous appetites and egoistic impulses, and generally supply food and nourishment to the latter. Hence this self-identification with the family, though it teaches some amount of self-control and self-sacrifice and supplies us with some sources of non-sensuous enjoyment, does not lead us far in the path of the solution of the problem of sorrow.

Further, the family being a small unit, the conflicts of the interests of different families and the consequent rivalry, hostility, hatred, suspiciousness,

vindictiveness, maliciousness and all other sources of disharmony and restlessness and sorrow, must inevitably infect the life of the individual, who confines his sense of unity with fellow-beings within his family circle and devotes his thought and will to the exclusive service of the family. In order to find a path to greater enjoyment and less suffering, a man's attachment to the family circle must be subordinated to his sense of unity with a wider society; he must learn to look upon the family as only a small part of the bigger society, with the interests of which he has to identify his own interests and those of the family. In this way he has to train his thought in widening the conception of society and in looking upon and judging the interests of the smaller circles from the standpoint of the wider and wider circles.

### XIII. TO AN ENLIGHTENED MAN SOCIETY MEANS THE ENTIRE HUMANITY

A man's conception of Society should pass from the family to the particular community to which he belongs, and from the community to the nation, and from the nation it should march on to include the entire Humanity. A man who seeks to enjoy tranquil happiness and to make his mind free from restlessness and sorrow, has to discipline his thought in the contemplation of the unity of his individual, domestic, communal and national selves with the self of the Humanity as a whole, and to discipline his active life accordingly. He has to learn to widen his outlook so far as to think that he is of the Humanity and the Humanity is his own. He has to train himself to cherish an attitude of love, regard and friendliness towards the entire human race and consequently towards all individuals, families, communities and nations included in it, and not to bear any feeling of envy, malice,

hatred or fear towards any. The play of his altruistic thoughts, emotions and activities should not meet any barrier anywhere within the human society.

Wherever there is felt a limit to the sense of unity and to the feelings of love and friendliness, a discordant note strikes the mind, and occasions for restlessness and sorrow arise. Attachment, which is a source of sorrow when limited to any individual, or family or community or even any nation, because in all such cases it is accompanied by hatred, hostility, envy, fear, etc. in relation to others outside those limits, becomes itself an inexhaustible source of happiness when extended to all, because it then takes the form of universal love, which sweetens the entire nature and beautifies the entire world.

If a man can make Humanity the real centre of his life's interest and can regulate his actions from that point of view, the spiritual value of his actions is heightened a thousandfold, whatever may be their materialistic utility. It must necessarily be a limited number of people, who will be directly affected by the service rendered by the man, and the number of people benefited and the nature of the benefit conferred on them by his actions must of course be determined by his intellectual, economic and other natural and acquired equipments. But his aim and object being the good of Humanity, the service rendered by him even to a single man of the lowest grade of the society will be from the spiritual point of view a service to the entire human society. This outlook and any work sincerely performed in accordance with it becomes a source of immense inward happiness much more enjoyable than any sensuous pleasure.

Thus the contemplation of the unity of his life with the life of Humanity, the consciousness of his being born in

and for the human society, the culture of the altruistic feelings of love, sympathy, benevolence, friendliness, etc. towards all individuals and all sections of people with the idea that they are particular manifestations of Humanity, and the cultivation of the habit of rendering services to men as men to the best of his capacities, equipments and opportunities, are sure to raise the mind to such a plane of self-enjoyment, that the vicissitudes of his individual and domestic life will scarcely be able to disturb the serenity of his enjoyment. Many of the sources of sorrow will, as it must have been evident from the foregoing discussion, disappear from him as the inevitable result of the harmony established between himself and his human environments and the suppression of the egoistic impulses, emotions and thoughts. The sources of sorrow that appear in the normal course of life, such as physical ailments, domestic bereavements, economic losses, natural catastrophes, etc. lose their sting and do not disturb the equilibrium of mind, and they do not create the impression that to suffer is the lot of man. Thus life becomes enjoyable and the problem of sorrow is greatly solved.

Here a doubt may arise in the mind of some inquirers, that though it is admissible that the widening of the outlook and the cultivation of the sense of unity with Humanity increase the sources of happiness and decrease the sources of misery in many directions, still in other directions the sources of sorrow are likely to increase; because the peoples belonging to different sections of the human race are known to suffer so many various kinds of miseries, that sympathy with them without any power to help is sure to create fresh sorrows in the mind every day. Here there is a psychological paradox. Not only mere sympathy, but even actual volun-

tary participation, in the sorrows of others, though outwardly producing some sufferings in the mind, becomes a source of intense internal joy of permanent value, which even sweetens these temporary sufferings. Moreover, attention being directed towards the sufferings of others, one's own sympathetic sorrow does not count at all at that time. Sincere sympathy is of inestimable value in solving the problem of sorrow, because it makes a man forget and creates in his mind an attitude of indifference to his own individual sorrows.

#### XIV. THE REALIZATION OF THE UNITY OF THE SELF AND THE UNIVERSE IS THE HIGHEST IDEAL

For emancipation from sorrow, our outlook on the physical environments also has to be so changed, that a harmonious relationship may be established between ourselves and those environments. We generally assume that the relation between ourselves and the environments is an external one; we pass judgments upon the events of the external nature from the standpoint of the demands of our sensuous life; we ponder over the cruelties of nature when we find the natural phenomena unfavourable to the satisfaction of our desires. We think that it is by hard struggle with the forces of nature that we have to live and to enjoy ourselves. The conquest of these forces becomes the chief object of civilized life. In many cases we are elated with joy and pride to find that the forces of nature meekly submit to the power of human intelligence and will. But soon we are disillusioned by the experiences of the natural catastrophes which convince us of the utter insignificance of our powers to fight them. Even the primary problem of food and drink cannot be solved without the co-operation of nature. If



we cannot befriend nature, sorrows are inevitable.

We cannot expect that nature should act according to our sensuous desires, just as we cannot expect that other men should act in accordance with our individual likings and requirements. We have to accept Nature as she is. We have to receive from her the benefits that she is ready to confer upon us, and we have undoubtedly to make what efforts we are capable of in that direction. But we should not be disappointed whenever she does not yield to our importunities.

We have to realize by contemplation that Nature also has a life of her own and that her actions are regulated by the laws of that life. The laws discovered by the physical sciences are only partial aspects of those laws. There is one life pervading the universe, one plan and purpose governing all its departments, one central ideal to the realization of which all orders of phenomena are contributing. Whether it is or is not possible to determine metaphysically the nature of that life, the nature of that plan and purpose and the nature of that ideal, it is not of much importance for the solution of our practical problem of sorrow. What is of importance in this case is to form a conception, however indetermined it may be, of one infinite self-modifying living universe, all whose activities are in accordance with some plan, purpose and ideal immanent in her life,—all the phenomena in which are the expressions of the rhythmic movements of the joyful dance of the soul of that entire system. We also are the manifestations of the same Life. The same Life which pulsates in us is exhibiting itself through the productions and developments and destructions of the outside world. It is our ignorance or imperfect understanding of this essential unity between ourselves and the external world, looking upon the diverse

phenomena of nature as isolated from one another and as without any plan and purpose, and estimating their values from the standpoint of our individual or communal sensuous interest, that make the world appear as a place of sorrows.

The contemplation of the inner unity of the apparently diversified universe and the essential identity of one's own self with the self of the universe,—the mental discipline to view all the phenomena of the human society as well as of the physical world as the expressions of that one self and as occurring in accordance with some universal plan and purpose and ideal, which, though inscrutable to our finite understanding, is none the less real,—a systematic endeavour to feel that our own being is a particular embodiment of that one infinite and eternal all-pervading self of the universe and to look upon all others also in the same light,—this is the greatest weapon for the destruction of sorrow in human life. This outlook, once formed, changes the face of the world. The world, with all its diversities, reveals itself to this view as the type of goodness and benevolence, harmony and beauty. It is through the realization of this unity between the self and the world that the apparently refractory world-forces can be successfully conquered. Every event, whatever may be its outward appearance, is then experienced as bringing with it a message of love and blessing from the Infinite and Eternal, and produces a surprisingly agreeable impression upon the mind. All orders of phenomena appear as so many different forms of ripples and waves on the breast of the ocean of Truth, Beauty, Goodness, and Bliss. The formation of this outlook does not require the acceptance of any metaphysical theory or religious dogma. But it requires a systematic discipline of

thought, feeling and will with a view to look upon all things from the standpoint of the whole,—all particulars from the standpoint of the universal,—all

manifestations from the standpoint of the Reality. In the highest plane of thought, feeling and will, all sorrows vanish as illusory.

## SAINT LORENZO GIUSTINIANI

BY WOLFRAM H. KOCH

About midway between Fusina and Venice is a small island, called San Giorgio in Alga. A white statue of the Madonna, a cluster of trees, a campanile, a church and a few houses, this is all that is to be seen when passing it in a boat. All round are the green waters of the lagoon with its banks of quietly waving seaweeds, here and there broken by the blue canals or the silvery wings of some sea-gull, and a deep, age-old silence seems to hover above and to encircle it, softening down the harsh noise of modern traffic and the loud talk of pleasure-seeking globe-trotters, drowning their pettiness and arrogant self-assertion in its great stillness. This was the setting in which the most important and formative part of the life of Lorenzo Giustiniani was spent in the company of a number of priests, following the rule of St. Augustine and bearing the name of "Canons Regular of San Giorgio", for it was to this monastery that, in the year 1400, the nineteen years old descendant of an illustrious Venetian family that had given captains and doges to the Republic turned for advice and admittance.

In one of his writings Lorenzo Giustiniani himself tells us the reasons that made him, the young patrician with magnificent worldly prospects, leave the comforts and honours of his paternal home to exchange them for the seclusion and the solitude of a life of hard

discipline and contemplative prayer in the stillness of that small, out-of-the-way island. He says:

"I sought something that would fully satisfy my desire for happiness, but I did not succeed in finding this, neither in the distractions offered by the city, nor in the satisfaction of my studies in which my talents and my natural gift of speech gave me the possibility of occupying the first place. One day, while I was meditating on my future, a luminous vision appeared to me all of a sudden, a beautiful virgin crowned with stars, who began to comfort me with sweet words, saying, 'I am she whom thou seekest: Divine Wisdom. But remember that my gifts and my grace are reserved for those who seek me in the solitude of their cell, far away from all worldly noise.'

"Scarcely had she spoken these words, than the vision disappeared, and I had the impression of awaking from a dream. But now I knew which was the life I had to follow, so as to obey the will of the Lord."

Everybody loved the young boy for his exemplary conduct and the grace and sweetness of his manners. Thus his brothers asked him in 1406 to become the prior of their monastery and later even the abbot of the community. And there was nothing that Lorenzo Giustiniani would have liked better than that, being fully satisfied

with the spiritual realizations and pleasures his life on the solitary island afforded him. But the rumour of his holiness began to spread more and more, and finally Pope Eugene IV decided to raise him to the dignity of bishop of the diocese of Castello (Olivolo). As a bishop Lorenzo Giustiniani, although being dragged against his will from the inconspicuousness and seclusion of his God-devoted life of prayer and contemplation, turned his indefatigable zeal to his new office, giving so great an example of a holy and self-sacrificing life in word and deed, that in 1451, on the death of the bishop of Rialto, Pope Nicholas V reunited the two dioceses—that of Rialto and that of Castello (Olivolo) into which the Venetian territory had been divided until then—raising them to the grade of a patriarchate and naming Giustiniani the first patriarch of Venice.

Age and bad health prevented Lorenzo Giustiniani from enjoying the honours of this high office for long. He died five years later on the 8th of January, 1456.

Saint Lorenzo Giustiniani, little known though he be to the general reader, occupies an important position in the history of Italian mysticism. The fact of all his works being originally written in Latin may have been the cause of keeping him more or less unknown down to the present day, although his writings are full of true spiritual fervour and animated by deep sincerity and feeling.

Of his life and works might be said in the beautiful words of Thiruppan Alvar:

“Eyes drunk with His beauty—will they ever wander to the transient joys and vain delusions of the earth?”

Three things were specially dear to his heart: the solitary life, prayer,

and chastity,—and to these he refers again and again in his writings, exalting their worth and significance in the life of the earnest spiritual aspirant.

The following passages are taken from different books and are in no way meant to be exhaustive:

“Virginity makes us like the angels in the purity of body and soul, and, in so far as this is granted to human weakness, it makes us participants in those gifts which we shall have in common with them in the heavenly home, according to Christ’s words:

“ ‘For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.’ In the meantime, during the life on earth, nothing equals virginity. Overcoming the forces and limitations of nature and closely following the traces of the heavenly spirits, it makes us foretaste the delights of future life and eternal happiness.”

Saint Lorenzo Giustiniani gives a very prominent place to prayer and recollection, stressing again and again the salutary effects and the importance of such practices, if done in the right spirit. So he says:

“Of all spiritual practices, of all the duties of Christian piety, none serves better than prayer in keeping up the virtuous habits of the soul, in increasing the zeal for our moral improvement. It is an act of our spirit guided by the lights of eternal wisdom, inflamed by the ardour of the Holy Ghost, which, if done in purity of heart, does not need any ornament of words, for the Divine Spirit Himself instructs us as to what we ought to do. And prayer does not consist in the movement of the lips, nor in the sound of the voice, but in an intimate thought of adoration, in firm intention and sincere affection. Many pray with the

mouth, but few, alas, pray with the heart."

"Throw off the burden of iniquity which bends thee towards the earth and earthly things, shake off the oppressing weight of thy impure passions, wash the stains of thy face and with a soul thus cleansed go onward confident, direct thy prayers to the Lord, confide in Him, think that He is thy brother, that He is blood of thy blood, flesh of thy flesh. Look attentively at His wounds, study His bleeding heart, the scars on His hands and feet, and then thou shalt understand how great ought to be thy confidence in Him. Could He, Who gave Himself wholly, refuse thee anything? Contemplate if thou canst the Word of God, and thou shalt see that thou livest in Him, for all that has been created has its life from Him."

"O vivifying Life in which live all things, vivify also me, though not with the life of the flesh, but with that of the spirit. Make that I live in Thee and Thou in me. For none truly lives who does not live for Thee. Thou hast spoken the sweet consoling words—ah, words sweeter indeed than the honey of the flowers: 'I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.'—Yea, Thou art the Way of those who believe, the Truth of those who contemplate, the Life of those who reign together with Thee in Bliss Eternal."

"When the Lord wished to give the Israelites that heritage, which He had intended for them, and to make them enter the promised land, irrigated by sweet waters and filled with honeycombs, He ordered them above all to make war upon the peoples inhabiting those happy regions till they had vanquished and subjected them in order that they might enjoy in peace

the possession of their fields and their cities.

"Now, these enemies are the senses. And the promised land is solitude, in which it is not possible to taste peace so long as the senses have not been subjugated. For it is they who occupy our hereditary land, who usurp our property and lay it waste, preventing it from flowering and giving fruits of goodness and justice. The senses pervert our reason with thousands and thousands of impurities by which they are made foul, and imprison it, dragging it towards darkness and death. Because of such imprisonment reason is bereft of light and guidance, remains astonished and stupefied, as it were, incapable of even listening to the most salutary warnings.

"Who could tell how many obstacles, how many impediments the senses place in the way of our morally perfecting ourselves? Through the senses the soul sucks in the pestiferous poison of sin. When we lend our ears to him who speaks badly of our neighbour or holds dishonest conversation, does it not seem as if a breath of death were passing into our heart? And have not the words we listen to the power of giving birth in us to an infinitude of visions and pictures, so that the troubled heart becomes agitated like a ship tossed hither and thither by the tempestuous waves of the sea? Who is there that does not know how prejudicial is the flattery of the eyes? How the smiles and blandishments of a woman, the lustre of jewels, the glitter of gold, the splendour of dwellings and gardens awaken our concupiscence? These pictures that dissipate the soul's concentration, that destroy it, put burning desires in the heart which disturb its peace, waste all energy of good and drag us into the mire. And even if we do not fall into sin, we are at least assailed

by an invincible languor, half-heartedness, and aversion.

"Let us, therefore, watch attentively that the enemy does not enter our house to rob it, to destroy it with the ardours of his passions or with the deadly chill of his inertia."

And the strain and tension produced by this constant watchfulness, which is the *sine qua non* of all spiritual striving in Saint Lorenzo Giustiniani's eyes, can only be minimized and sweetened by prayer.

"In prayer the soul is cleansed of sin, charity receives food, faith is made firm, hope strengthened, the mind is gladdened; Divine emotions are kindled by prayer, the heart is purified, Truth discovered, temptations are conquered, sadness flees, feelings are renewed, weakened virtue is repaired, half-heartedness takes its leave, and the rust of vice is consumed. And in prayer are not missing living sparks of heavenly desires, amidst which burns the flame of Divine Love. Great are the glories of prayer. Great are its privileges. The heavens are open to it. All secrets are unveiled to prayer and the ears of God are always attentive to it."

To Lorenzo Giustiniani prayer is spiritual refreshment. It is a breath of the Holy Ghost, as it were, by which the devotee's heart is strengthened and, at the same time, transformed, so that his desire for spiritual things and his disgust for all kinds of sensual pleasures and enjoyments steadily increases. He sees the proof of this in our own daily experience and in the effects we feel after really sincere and deep prayer and meditation, the moment we try to become fully conscious of them. He finds in the strengthening of all our good intentions and of the spirit of sacrifice and self-surrender to the Divine, even unto death, the best proof

of his assertion, a proof which can be easily verified by any sincere aspirant in his own life.

"There are some people who take exception to the solitary life, saying: 'Does God perhaps belong only to the solitary and not also to the man of the world? Can one not, even while living in the world, attend to the works of compassion and charity, give food to those who are hungry and drink to those who are thirsty, clothe the naked, attend the sick, accommodate the pilgrims, comfort the prisoners, bury the dead, give advice to the erring, console the afflicted, in short, practise all the duties of brotherly love and Christian compassion? And do not the Holy Scriptures disapprove of solitude, saying: 'Woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up?'"

"Ah, how remote from Truth are those who speak in such a strain! How is it possible, while being in the world, to attend to one's own inner edification? He who is enveloped in the affairs of the world loses the habit of inner conversation, dissipates himself wholly in outward things, is subjected to a thousand temptations, a thousand attractions, a thousand dangers of falling into sin. The world is an ocean infested by pirates, a land of robbery where the robbers despoil the wayfarers and attack the houses to steal the treasures. It is the kingdom of iniquity where the mighty oppress the poor with open violence. The cunning, with their tricks and their impostures, deceive the simple, the ambitious continuously outrun the honest. Where is equity, where holiness? Justice is banished from the world, truth is not tolerated therein; yea, everything is confusion and disorder. There is no reverence for the highest laws, no respect for friendship and for good faith between

men. The unchained passions rouse enmities, hatred, discord, wars. Men are hard-hearted and barbarous : shamelessness triumphs, adultery is a common thing, discords rise again and again unceasingly, the most shameful and dishonest passions are tolerated in the world with impunity. Ambition holds sway, pride and vanity erect a pedestal for those who deserve to be dragged into the mire and who should be despised by all.

"And you call him stupid who separates himself from this hell of miseries and sufferings, of misfortunes and disease, of hunger and cold, of poverty and pain, desperation and death? You would like to find fault with him who despises the world and tramples on it as one tramples on a faded flower, which begins to decay as soon as it is plucked? Fools, you speak of the solitary life as a blind man would speak of colours, because you have never tasted its sweetness. You ignore that the Lord particularly seeks out the solitary that they may not grow cold in this love of Him, and grants them special favours and consolations because of their having repudiated those of this world. For them says the Prophet:

'Fleeing, I withdrew myself and remained in solitude.' And David sang in the Psalm:

'Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man : thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.' "

Being a true devotee of the Highest, Saint Lorenzo Giustiniani knew far too well that the Lord will not dwell in the same heart that encloses worldly desires and worldly impurities and that the foremost condition for His coming and the realization of His presence are renunciation and purity of body and mind.

"In order to realize the Self, you have to scale the highest peak of renunciation." If this is not recognized in the life of a devotee, his yearning for the higher life is not sincere, and His God is after all a verbal affair, an affair of self-seeking lip-homage and nothing more. So long as the devotee prays : —'Give me this, give me that. Do not allow this or that to happen to me', his prayer is nothing but the expression of his selfishness and his clinging to worldly enjoyments, gross or subtle. Renunciation and purity of body and mind, i.e. freedom from all desire for enjoyment, will always be the very basis of a truly spiritual life.

Speaking of the delights of Divine communion Saint Lorenzo Giustiniani says:

"As the light of the sun conquers the light of the moon and stars, so the sweetness and the chaste delights of him who comes to possess true wisdom surpass all satisfactions, whether of the body or of the mind, that any created being can give us. For these pleasures, though they may seduce and tempt our inclinations and occupy our heart, never succeed in satisfying our desire. The very shortness of their duration is made to torment the human mind which, by a natural disposition, aspires to enjoy unceasingly that which it loves. Whatever is unstable and passing can never content a soul created for eternal bliss.

"Thus all that which is not God, being imperfect, can never entirely satisfy a person who devotes his love to it, for, owing to a principle of providence, human nature tends always to seek something more perfect, more noble, more elevated. Now, there is no thing worthier, no occupation nobler than the search after Truth which attracts us the more, the more clearly we understand It. For this reason

Jesus said to His Heavenly Father: 'And this is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God, and the Saviour whom thou hast sent.'

"No creature can ever suffice another: only God, being infinite, can suffice an infinitude of creatures and Himself. He who seeks to quench his thirst, should not stop at the first streamlet he meets, but he should seek that limpid, pure and perennial source, that source of which the Prophet says: 'In thee alone is found the source of life, in thy light alone can we find the light which our being needs and which must redeem us from darkness and misery.'

"This spring comes down from heaven and bedews the hearts of the faithful according to their needs. Its presence is not manifest by outward signs, but it gives the soul an inner light, a heavenly serenity and calmness. To some it gives wisdom, to others knowledge, to others again discrimination.

"The word which comes from the lips of God, the Eternal Word, germinates in the hearts so that those who begin to live in the service of God are like trees clothing themselves with flowers in the bright days of spring, whereas those who are already advanced in spiritual life, are like fruit-trees in autumn, bearing large quantities of apples, fragrant and beautiful to the eye, while the Lord's blessing rains on them the heavenly dew of His consolation and of His grace.

"To behold God, to live with God Who is all for all, to have God as the Highest Good, such shall be the reward of the Chosen. In the Highest Good there is supreme happiness, supreme joy, true freedom, perfect charity, eternal safety, eternal tranquillity. In Him is found complete joy,

perfect science, beauty and attraction, bliss without a shadow of disturbance. There reign peace, piety, goodness, light, virtue, honesty, joy, sweetness, glory, praise, rest and harmony. So shall be happy in God and with God whoever is found cleansed of sin. He shall behold God as he pleases, shall enjoy God without contrasts, shall possess Him in all eternity."

The above passages may not be sufficient for a true appreciation and valuation of Saint Lorenzo Giustiniani's work, but they may be a small contribution to show the general reader the essential unity of Divine Thought, no matter what is the garb in which It comes to us through one of Its servants. Lorenzo Giustiniani may be but one of the smaller stones in the marvellous pattern and the wealth of different shades of the Divine mosaic, but even then, the beauty and expression of the whole design can often be marred by the lack of just a few such stones and the world be made poorer thereby.

We shall end these quotations by giving part of one of Giustiniani's beautiful and touching prayers in which he pours out all his longing for the Divine.

"Love me, O Lord, for if Thou lovest me not, I shall not be able to know Thee nor to approach Thee. None can love Thee without Thy grace if his heart be not pure, serene and suffused with celestial light. Come down to me, O Serene Light, make my heart restful and calm. Give me Thy peace. O True Peace, My God, O Serene Peace, Quiet Peace, Sweetest Peace, where the eye of the mind is not dimmed nor the state of the heart, where there is rest eternal."

Coming to the Essence, we come to all, but coming to a great teacher or prophet in a spirit of exclusiveness, we come to none, not even to him, because

then he is seen as something separate and unique, and That of Which he is but one of the innumerable aspects is lost sight of. When a particular great one is seen against the unchanging and undivided background of the Divine and as one with It, there is no danger in following his words, for then the Essence is recognized as something all-inclusive, possessing a greater reality than he, but seeing him as unique and essentially separate in nature from those before him or after him, who, too, have been and will be the instruments and messengers of the Divine, leads the devotee to bigotry, self-assertion in the name of his particular creed, and to slow but certain fossilization, as has been the case again and again in the history of the message of prophets and incarnations through all the centuries.

The moment the Divine is limited or tied to one particular form and period

alone, Its spirit is hidden from our eyes and Its message distorted and misunderstood. Wherever there is the exclusiveness of the bigot, there Truth is crucified and the way is paved for spiritual death and materialism, because it is blasphemy and one of the most noxious forms of self-assertion under the cloak of religion to limit Him Who is taught to be Love and to make Him subservient to one's own petty likes and dislikes, which, in most cases, have their roots deep down in the soil of ignorance and of the desire for power.

So let us all sincerely pray to Him to give us greater discrimination and greater love for His all-comprehensive aspect, no matter what particular path we ourselves may be endeavouring to follow. Only when the ocean is recognized can the true nature and meaning of the wave be grasped.

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## KÂLI, THE MOTHER

BY MALIKA ROSS

Everyone sings praises to Mothers today,\*  
 Gentle, indulgent, sweet-voiced Mothers.  
 But I sound a trumpet-like call to Thee,  
 Oh Kâli, thou terrible Goddess of Death!  
 Destroyer of demons, slayer of 'self-ness',  
 Make me Thy battleground. Advance on the field,  
 Thy black hair swaying in rhythm  
 With the brandishing of Thy bloody sword!  
 But in the midst of the gory combat,  
 In the fury of Thy fearless fight,  
 Let not the splashing of demon's blood  
 Obscure, from Thy eyes, my heart.  
 For thereon flies the banner of white,  
 My heart is forever at peace with Thee.  
 Though besieged by fierce enemies  
 It is loyal to Thee, Mother.  
 Oh Empress of Existence, Power of Siva,  
 My heart is Thine—my heart is Thee!

\* Written on "Mother's Day", May 10, 1986.



# HISTORY OF THE VEDÂNTIC THOUGHT

BY SWAMI SATSWARUPANANDA

(Continued from the last issue)

Sankara's main contribution to Indian philosophy is his theory of *Mâyâ* or Becoming. Brahman or Being, which is also Consciousness and Bliss, is in Itself nothing but Being; nothing can be predicated of It. The Absolute cannot be expressed in language nor conceived by the mind, for to conceive or to express is to limit. No amount of accumulation of relatives, however vast that may be, can make up the Absolute; sums of finites can give us vast finites but not the infinite—vastness is not infinitude. This is *Nirguna* or *Nirvisesha* Brahman or Brahman as It is in Itself, felt in intuition transcending the limits of mind. With the Absolute there can be no creation, for creation, bound by time as it is, is limited, relative, fleeting. The Absolute has no change, no transformation, for then it will be relative. We cannot say It becomes. It simply is. And "isness" involves awareness as awareness involves "isness". Being always the unruffled same It is Bliss. Brahman is Being-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. Here Sankara stops. He is as much an *Ajâtavâdin*, non-creationist, as his great-Guru *Gaudapâda*. To say that Sankara couples *Nirguna* Brahman with creation is to attribute to him what that great philosopher never dreamt. Really speaking (*Paramârthatah*) there is no creation; Brahman alone is.

But where the other philosopher has fought shy or stopped short without reaching the goal, Sankara's sharp intellect has penetrated deep into it.

We individuals feel we are and so are the other things of this wondrous world. And no philosophy is worth the name which does not give a rational explanation of creation. *Gaudapâda* can keep silent over it, but Sankara cannot, for the simple reason that he is to give to the world a systematic philosophy. The philosophies of the two are not different, if by philosophy we mean statement of unalloyed truth. When they state the *real truth*, they say : there has never been any creation; all is Brahman, not in the sense that there is an all and there is Brahman and they are not different but identical, but in the sense, there is no all, there is only Brahman, that which appears as all is not all but Brahman. But this is a rather superhuman point of view. Man must go beyond mind to understand this real nature of truth—truth not as grasped by mind but truth as it is. Man, however, has got a mind, and to him the real is that which is certified by the mind to be so—to be real, it must be grasped by the mind and stamped as true. Here Sankara leaves his grand-preceptor on the high pedestal and descends down to the human level to be of use to humanity.

So Sankara takes creation as a matter-of-fact (*Vyavahârika*) truth. So long as there is a mind, there is the diversity of creation. It is not idealism. The outer world is not the creation of the mind. It is as real, as independently real, as the mind itself. Here Sankara is a realist of realists. To him the material world

is as real as the mental, the distinction between the two being that while the one is finer the other is grosser. And there is no end of these grades of fineness and grossness. It is difficult, rather impossible, to say where the province of one ends and that of the other begins—in fact mind is involved in matter. The creation as a whole is both beginningless and endless; and in it both the effects and their causes are eternally existent, the effects being more transitory in particular manifested forms and the causes more permanent, but all in the process of eternal transformations, eternal becomings. What is the nature of these becomings? Are they real or not? Are they being or non-being? Sankara's answer is, they are both or logically stated, they are none of both. For whatever thing of the world we observe minutely, we find something of it abiding and something changing. Nothing is reduced to naught—names and forms are constantly changing but their "isness", that whose names and forms they are, abides. And throughout these eternal, incessant transformations this remains absolutely unchanged. Now that which remains unchanged under all conditions is truly real this is Sankara's definition of truth. Therefore according to this definition everything is true in one sense. Again at the same time and in the same 'locus', changes go on which debar him from calling everything true. So everything is true and not-true, being and non-being at the same time, which is impossible, and yet it is a fact. Experiencing it every moment of our lives in diverse ways, we cannot say, the world is not; and seeing everything of it perishing from moment to moment, we cannot say, it is, unless we equate 'is' with 'is not', creation with destruction, thereby doing violence to language

and experience itself. This is the nature of Becoming, of Mâyâ. It is neither real nor unreal; we cannot say it exists nor can we say it does not exist. So it has been defined as something inexpressible, other than being and not-being. In the midst of changes something abides, unchanged and unchangeable—this is Being. Looked at from this standpoint there is no Mâyâ—Mâyâ is that which is not (*yâ mâ, sâ Mâyâ*, the meaning of Mâyâ is got by interchanging the syllables of the word). Being does not change and non-being, because it is non-entity, cannot. What then will change? So whose is this Mâyâ or becoming?—is nonsense. But when we focus our attention on the products of Mâyâ or products which are Mâyâ i.e. on the changes, we find them alone, they are to all intents and purposes the dazzling realities compared to which what the saints, seers, and philosophers call Being is but a shadowy spectre. Change alone is life, permanence may relate to death. Change alone is true; if there be anything which does not change, it must be false, unreal. From this viewpoint of Vyavahâra Mâyâ is true. And from the philosopher's standpoint of reason and experience it is Sadasat, true-and-false, or if logic intervenes, it is neither this nor that—an inexpressible category, but by no means a non-entity (*Abhâvât-mikâ*). This world of mind and matter in a continuous simultaneous process of creation, preservation and destruction by mutual action and reaction is Mâyâ, mere becoming. We have seen, we cannot ask whose or whence it is. It, and everything of it, comes into being, grows, decays, dies and again comes into being in another form, and again completes the round. This goes on and on from eternity to eternity. In it, we are and see facts; above it, there is nothing to explain—it is all one

without a second. Our goal, however, according to Sankara, is to be the Being, that we always have been, by transcending becomings. This goal is to be attained by the realization of the true knowledge of our self, which is Being. Here crops up a great question that is very often asked. How can self or Being, which is consciousness become unconscious of its own nature? How can Bliss itself be caught up in the meshes of sorrows? Here the answer is just as before. Being or self has never "become", consciousness has never become unconscious, Bliss never experiences sorrows. Being is Being because it does not change; if it does, it is no Being. It is the mind, and not the self, that experiences all these; and mind is a product of Becoming, it moves within it and shares all its characteristics. Within it, it is a fact in interaction with numerous other facts; beyond it, it is not. So we are again debarred from asking whence it is and how it has come to take the place of the "I". These are not ingenious logical subtleties to silence opponents, but simple, honest truths, understandable and realizable by all who care.

What relation does this *Mâyâ* or Becoming bear to Brahman or Being? Though this question has been answered in a way, a few words more seem to be necessary. The relation is best expressed by the famous example of the imaginary snake in a piece of rope. In a half-lighted place there is a rope; a man takes it to be a snake, shrieks out in fright, and runs for life. Now what is the cause of all these? The imaginary snake of course. And where is it? It is not in the rope nor in the mind of the man; and yet it must be somewhere to be terribly experienced by the man. But ask the man and he will point out to the rope, though it has all along been as good a rope as ever. *Mâyâ* has the

same relation with Brahman as this imaginary snake has with the rope. Brahman is as good a cause of this universe as the rope is of the snake and all that followed. The truth is, *Mâyâ*, which is neither being nor non-being, is, acts, and presents facts, Becoming becomes. Had it been purely non-being, there could not have been all these. It is due to its resemblance to Being, which has been metaphorically called its touch with or nearness to it, that becoming is made possible.

So far about the material causality of Brahman. Its efficient causality can be understood thus. When we say that the potter is the efficient cause of the pot, we mean the potter's mind which planned the pot. Now mind is within Becoming, a particular stage in its process; and as such must ultimately depend on Being, even in the same way as matter does. Whether mind or matter, apart from their changing names and forms, they are nothing but the Spirit or Being, the unchangeable something that abides. Hence the efficient cause, the planning mind, derives its semblance of reality from this Being-Consciousness-Bliss. In this sense is Being the efficient cause of the universe. The planner, the plan and the thing planned, the executor, the execution and the thing executed—all derive their ultimate reality as well as its semblance from this Being. It is to make people understand this that Brahman or Being has been called both the material and the efficient cause of the universe—not that it has actually "become" all these, but that remaining ever unchanged (*Kutastha nitya*) it makes Becoming possible. It is not the source of the world in the sense that it should be or can be traced from one point in time or space to another. It is always the same Being everywhere, that appears from one particular stage

of consciousness to be a whirlpool of infinite becomings. In fact Being is, Becoming is not; and 'is' has or can have no relation with 'is not'.

Thus the Vedic monotheism or monism intuitively grasped and expressed in the language of intuition by the Rishis, and systematized with a bias towards intuition by Vyāsa, receives a thorough rationalistic explanation at the hand of Sankara, who without adding to or improving the truth of intuition (for it admits of no improvement or addition) has given such a powerful logical expression to the solutions of the knotty problems that he might be acclaimed as the highest fulfilment of Indian philosophy. The grand attempt of the Indian thought to reach the highest synthesis is seen materialized in Sankara's commentary on Vyāsa's *Brahma-Sūtras*. The history of Vedānta philosophy after Sankara is a history of attacks and counter-attacks on and by the different theories of monism, qualified monism, and dualism or pluralism, generally based on misunderstandings of some sort and provoked not unoften by sectarianism, but yielding the good result of enriching the philosophical speculations of India.

There is one important point to note in the later non-Sankarite systems of philosophy. They are all philosophies of Becoming, with perhaps the solitary exception of that of Bhāskara, who steers a middle course. Sankara's philosophy, on the other hand, is a philosophy of Being and Becoming with a bias towards Being. And he has a deeper reason for doing so. The pains, that the scriptures before Sankara since the time of the earliest *Vedas* took, was to reveal the true nature of Being. But let us forget the works of Sankara including his bringing out of

separate editions of some of the *Upanishads* and we are sure to lose our way in the wilderness of the Vedic literature—it is so vast and varied that the central theme is apt to be lost sight of. It is Sankara who holds it aloft before our eyes. His mission of life was to bring this light of Being to all intelligent human beings. In his commentaries and short original Vedāntic primers, he has made the nature of Being so vividly and yet so briefly clear that it was not approached by anyone before. The philosophy of Being has reached its acme in Sankara. But he has also given the philosophy of Becoming a due share, a subordinate place no doubt. To him Being really is and Becoming has *but* a pragmatic value—he would never omit the word 'but'. Being never 'becomes', Becoming never rises to Being—Being is Being, Becoming Becoming; Being is ever free, Becoming is ever, eternally, caught in the meshes of causation. Thus did he give the philosophy of Being the finishing touch; and the later commentators on the *Brahma-Sūtras* were free to give that of Becoming any shape they liked.

When we say that the later commentators on the source-book of the Vedānta philosophy have built different philosophies of Becoming, we do not mean that they admit this. All of them claim that their attempts are to reveal the true nature of Being as described in the *Vedas*, particularly in the *Upanishads*. Their reading of the scriptures gives them their own particular notions of Being; they might or might not be true. Many centuries have elapsed in quarrelling over this, everyone is sticking to his own view as ever. But rightly or wrongly we take Being in the sense of Sankara i.e. that which does not change, and not that which does not change and yet changes. Taking Being in this sense we do not find any other school of

Vedānta dealing with Being; all come within the domain of Becoming. They do not admit the reality of Sankara's Being. It is as good as void to them. Starting with the world as real, as the real constituents of Brahman, they cannot lead themselves to believe in what they call a contentless Brahman of Sankara. Their Brahman is rich with infinite diversities constantly undergoing countless real modifications and yet remaining the same eternal witness. It is the creator, preserver, and destroyer of the universe, which is its body or real modification, and yet It does nothing. It is the only real doer and yet non-doer; it is the only enjoyer and yet It does not enjoy at all. Reason would not permit it. It involves a contradiction, which the upholders are conscious of. But they take their stand on the words of the *Vedas*, whose authority is unquestionable to them as well as to Sankara and his followers. But whereas Sankara and Sankarites would dive deeper to give a rational explanation to this seeming contradiction, they would not do so, on the ground that the attempt would involve what they consider to be a very dangerous conclusion, viz. of the denial of life and experience, which, according to them, can never be truly Vedic.

The arguments are weighty on both sides. We cannot deny life and experience on which reason is based, nor can we say what 'is' becomes 'is not' and what 'is not' becomes 'is'. Whether Sankara denies life and experience or not, we leave for the present, partly because what we have said is enough for a correct understanding of him and partly because we shall have to come to him again at the end. The fact remains, however, that all his opponents, past and present, and even some of the Western admirers of his philosophy, charge him with the denial of life, which

has gained ground because his followers never denied the charge. Let us now hear the three great adversaries of Sankara—Bhāskara, Rāmānuja, and Madhva. Of these the latter two are famous for their dialectics; and the other, little known to fame before, is slowly coming to his own because of the intrinsic worth of his philosophy despite his lack of logic. In spite of their differences in many points among themselves, they all agree to differ from Sankara that Being really "becomes", the Absolute has become the relative. There is no real contradiction between the Absolute and the relative, between Being and Becoming. The very nature of the Absolute, of Being, is such that it includes the relative within it, that it 'becomes'. The contradiction that we find is due to our limited vision, to the incapacity of the intellect to grasp properly a thing which does not come within the range of its normal experience. When in the analysis of every little thing of the world we find something abiding in the midst of changing names and forms and activities, why are we not justified in conceiving of Being as remaining the same Being yet undergoing infinite becoming? Why should it be necessary at all to falsify names, forms and activities, to stultify Becoming, in order to keep Being intact? Where is the proof that finite logic, the logic that has derived all its laws from the study of finite, limited, perishable things, would equally hold good in the case of a Being which is, to all intents and purposes, just the opposite in character? When in every finite thing we find a power acting from within working transformations and remaining the same in the midst of all these changes, even when the forms are dissolved, what right have we to deny reality to such an omnipresent, omnipotent principle, only to satisfy a logic

whose applicability in that sphere is questioned?

Before we come to the answers given by the Sankarites let us state the viewpoints of these three founders of non-Advaitic philosophies. Of these the Bhedābheda-vādins (i.e. the upholders of the theory of unity-cum-difference) come first chronologically—Bhāskara in the early part of the 9th century and Nimbārka Yādavaprakāsa in the 11th. Their main contentions are: (1) That Brahman or the Reality is both within and without the universe of matter and individual souls, both noumenal and phenomenal, static and dynamic, always with Viśeṣha or difference though sometimes manifested and sometimes unmanifested, and never Nirviśeṣha of the Sankarites. (2) That creation is real and not illusory and its relation with Brahman is one of identity-in-difference. (3) That the evils of Saṃsāra are due to erroneous perception of difference and that Mukti or emancipation of the individual souls consists in “the realization of the unity of the finite and the infinite”, not by the sublation of the finite but by its highest fulfilment “as the essential and eternal moment or member of the infinite.” (4) And that *Mukti* being so, it is impossible to attain it while living—*Jīvanmukti* is a myth. While agreeing in these essentials they have certain minor differences among themselves. Bhāskara holds that Chit and Achit, sentient beings and insentient matter, are parallel expressions of Brahman, thus admitting qualitative distinction between them. Moreover he has a leaning towards the Abhedā texts, to him difference is adventitious and unity is the ultimate truth. His individual souls, though they are distinct in the state of bondage, will be one with Brahman when released from it. But

he explains the many by the admission of real limiting adjuncts of the Absolute. Whereas Yādava does not admit any qualitative distinction between Chit and Achit—they being but the evolved and the involved states of consciousness. But they are eternal expressions of the Absolute with no hope of perfect union with It in any condition and eternally keeping up the relation of unity-in-difference, of part and the whole. He, however, does not find any necessity in conceiving of limiting adjuncts to the Absolute for the explanation of individuation. His Brahman is endowed with an immanent Parināma Śakti or energy of evolution and involution, which is sufficient for the explanation of all facts of creation and dissolution. The philosophy of Nimbārka is more akin to Yādava than to Bhāskara. Some have been led to think that Bhāskara's delimiting adjuncts of the Absolute are something extraneous and as such his philosophy has the defects of dualism. This is in fact a wrong reading of Bhāskara. When he explicitly says that the individual souls and matter are parallel expressions or manifestations of the Absolute and when the delimiting adjuncts are nothing but mind and matter in some form or other, we cannot consistently charge the Āchārya's system with dualistic defects. If this is admitted and when it is remembered that to him difference is adventitious and unity is the ultimate truth we cannot but admit that he is an absolutist with a thin difference from Sankara, whose Māyāvāda he controverts. Yādava and Nimbārka on the other hand are typical Bhedābhedists, without the defects of the dualists, one might say.

(To be continued)

# ATMABODHA

BY SWAMI SIDDHATMANANDA

यत्ताभावापरो लाभो यत्सुखान्नापरं सुखम् ।  
यज्ज्ञानान्नापरं ज्ञानं तद् ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥ ५४ ॥

यत् लाभान् To which acquisition अपरः superior लाभः acquisition न no (अस्ति there is) यत् सुखान् to which happiness अपरं superior सुखम् happiness न no (अस्ति there is) यत् ज्ञानान् to which knowledge अपरं superior ज्ञानं knowledge न no (अस्ति there is) तत् ब्रह्म इति अवधारयेत् know That to be Brahman.

54. Know That to be Brahman superior to which there is no other knowledge, bliss or acquisition.

यत् दृष्ट्वा नापरं दृश्यं यद्भुत्वा न पुनर्भवः ।  
यज् ज्ञात्वा नापरं ज्ञेयं तद् ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥ ५५ ॥

यत् दृष्ट्वा Having seen which अपरं any other दृश्यं what is to be seen न not (अवशिष्यते remains) यत् भूत्वा becoming which पुनर्भवः re-birth न not (विद्यते is) यत् ज्ञात्वा having known which अपरं anything else ज्ञेयं what is knowable न not (अवशिष्यते remains) तत् ब्रह्म इति अवधारयेत् know That to be Brahman.

55. Seeing which there remains nothing to be seen, becoming which there is no re-birth and knowing which there remains nothing to be known—know That to be Brahman.

तिर्य्यगूर्ध्वमधः पूर्णं सच्चिदानन्दमव्ययम् ।  
अनन्तं नित्यमेकं यत् तद् ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥ ५६ ॥

तिर्य्यक् On the sides ऊर्ध्वम् above अधः below यत् that पूर्णं filled with सच्चिदानन्दम् Existence, Intelligence, Bliss अव्ययम् without a second अनन्तं infinite नित्यम् eternal एकं one तद् ब्रह्म इति अवधारयेत् know That to be Brahman.

56. That which pervades the space above, below and on all sides, which is Existence, Knowledge, Bliss, and which is infinite, eternal, one, and without a second—know That to be Brahman.

अतद्ब्रह्मावृत्तिरूपेण वेदान्तैर्लक्ष्यतेऽव्ययम् ।  
अखण्डानन्दमेकं यत् तद् ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥ ५७ ॥

अव्ययम् Imperishable अखण्डानन्दम् everlasting bliss एकं one यत् which अतद्ब्रह्मावृत्तिरूपेण by the negation of all which is not That (Brahman) वेदान्तैः by the teachings of the Vedânta लक्ष्यते is indicated तद् ब्रह्म इति अवधारयेत् know That to be Brahman.

57. Which is one, imperishable, everlasting bliss, and which<sup>1</sup> is indicated by the Vedânta by the negation of all which is not That—know That to be Brahman.

<sup>1</sup> Which . . . . is not That—Due to ignorance the Self seems to be identified with the non-Self, i.e. the body etc. The Vedânta teaches the method of discrimination of the

Real from the unreal by the process of negation (*Neti, Ncti*—Atman is not this, not this, etc.—*Bri. Up. II. iii. 6 ; III. ix. 26*) of all the objects of the phenomenal world. Thus this path of discrimination leads one to the realisation of the Self which is beyond the reach of the senses.

**अखण्डानन्दरूपस्य तस्यानन्दलवाश्रिताः ।**

**ब्रह्माद्यास्तारतम्येन भवन्त्यानन्दिनोऽखिलाः ॥ ५८ ॥**

तस्य अखण्डानन्दरूपस्य Of that essence of everlasting bliss आनन्दलवाश्रिताः having obtained a particle of bliss ब्रह्माद्याः अखिलाः all beings from Brahmâ downwards तारतम्येन in different degrees आनन्दिनः blissful भवन्ति become.

58. Obtaining a particle of that everlasting bliss, all beings from Brahmâ downwards, become blissful, in different degrees.

See *Taitt. Up. II. 7* and *Bri. Up. IV. iii. 32*.

**तद्युक्तमखिलं वस्तु व्यवहारश्चिदन्वितः ।**

**तस्मात् सर्वगतं ब्रह्म क्षीरे सर्पिरिवाखिले ॥ ५९ ॥**

अखिलं वस्तु All things तद्युक्तम् permeated by That व्यवहारः (every) action चित् intelligence चिन्तितः associated with तस्मात् so अखिले क्षीरे सर्पिरिव like butter permeating all milk ब्रह्म Brahman सर्वगतं is all-pervading.

59. Everything is permeated by That and every action is associated with Intelligence ; so, like butter in milk Brahman pervades everything.

**अनण्वस्थूलमहस्वमदीर्घमजमव्ययम् ।**

**अरूपगुणवर्णाख्यं तद् ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥ ६० ॥**

यत् Which (is) अनण् not small अस्थूलम् not large अहस्वम् not short अदीर्घम् not long अजम् unborn अव्ययम् immutable अरूपगुणवर्णाख्यं known as without any form, attribute or colour तद् ब्रह्म इति अवधारयेत् know That to be Brahman.

60. Which is neither small nor large, neither short nor long, which is unborn and immutable, and which is without any form, attribute or colour—know That to be Brahman.

**यद्भासा भासतेऽर्कादि भास्यैर्यत्तु न भास्यते ।**

**येन सर्वमिदं भाति तद् ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥ ६१ ॥**

यद्भासा The light by which अर्कादि the sun and other luminous bodies भासते shine यत् तु but which भास्यैः by the illumined objects न भास्यते is illumined येन by which सर्वमिदं everything भाति shines तद् ब्रह्म इति अवधारयेत् know That to be Brahman.

61. The light by which are illumined the sun and other luminous bodies but Which is not illumined by them, and Which shining, everything shines—know That to be Brahman.



## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

*An Unpublished Letter of Sister Nivedita* contains some interesting ideas of the writer, expressed to an intimate friend of hers. . . . How India can solve the problem of modern economic competition and at the same time meet the demands of the human spirit is the theme of the Editorial, *Indian Individualism and the Modern Age*. . . . Dr. Nalini Kanta Brahma is a well-known professor of the Presidency College, Calcutta. *Knowledge and Liberation* lucidly explains how the Vedântic knowledge can emancipate man from the clutches of misery. . . . Prof. Akshaya Kumar Banerjee shows at length how the human life cannot fulfil itself without solving *The Problem of Sorrow*. . . . Wolfram H. Koch presents to us in this issue a highly inspiring account of Saint Lorenzo Giustiniani's life and teachings. . . . Swami Satswarupananda deals with Sankara's contribution to the Vedânta philosophy in this portion of his continued article, *History of the Vedântic Thought*.

### IS PHILOSOPHY WORTHWHILE?

Philosophy in the West has been chiefly an intellectual and speculative quest after reality. Its history is a series of ingenious guesses, all of which have been refuted or are in process of refutation. It is notorious that after more than two thousand years of logic-chopping and legerdemain philosophers have arrived at no agreed body of doctrine with regard to any of the main problems that they set before themselves to solve. Years have only burdened philosophical vocabulary with forbidding technicalities, and philosophers are in-

creasingly taking shelter in the profundity of obscurity which hides the mysteries of philosophy from the irreverent gaze of the uninitiated. Many have, therefore, pertinently asked in the West—of what use is philosophy to humanity? Dr. F. C. S. Schiller tries to find out some use of Philosophy in an article in the July issue of the *Hibbert Journal*. The different conceptions of philosophy prevailing in the different centres of learning in Europe are not encouraging. At Oxford the aim of philosophy is held to be 'reflection'. But reflection has so far proved abortive. At Cambridge philosophy is aspiring to the position of a pseudo-science. But the philosophical analysis on which it prides itself is a verbal and ephemeral thing groaning under the weight of horrid technicalities. It is "liable to be superseded at any moment by the discoveries of the sciences". At Moscow the aim of philosophy is to fashion out new arguments in support of the truth of the Dialectical Materialism which has been raised to the status of a State religion. Though Muscovite philosophers may chafe under these restrictions of their intellectual freedom, the system has nevertheless the saving grace of relating speculation to social good. Here is enough to show how the intellectual centres have failed to justify the pursuit of philosophy.

To rescue philosophy from this plight Dr. Schiller has some suggestions to offer. It is of course easy to go gushing about the lofty aims of philosophy, but it can never galvanize it into life. For this purpose something must be done to transform "it into meaningful activity and to bring it into relations

with the problems of life." Philosophy, he opines, can still be useful if it only restricts itself to a particular sphere and defines a common aim for its votaries. And what is to be the common aim? As all the sciences deal with only the partial aspects of reality, there is urgent "need for something more than science, namely for a comprehensive or synoptic treatment that will combine the partial views of the various sciences and will instruct us how to think of reality as a whole and how we can read a single coherent sense into the whole of our experience". The claim is modest and need not be altogether new. It remains to be seen if philosophy in the West will ever resign itself to this fate in despair.

Two comments may be offered on the above. Philosophic quest even of the speculative type has not been altogether vain. Even if no great positive results have been achieved, philosophy has at least shown beyond dispute that the commonsense view of reality, on which science bases itself, is far from a true representation of the real. This has given a well-deserved shock to the self-complacency of the common men and the scientists who rarely trouble themselves about ultimate questions. Secondly, there has all along been a wrong approach to the fundamental problems. In early days philosophy was allied with religion. Later philosophy started on its independent career relying solely on reason. Though it thus freed itself from the miasma of theological dogmatism it has become doomed to failure by accepting intellect as the only guide to truth. If philosophy is to be rescued from the charge of barrenness it has to cease to be merely speculative and to recognize other approaches which have claimed to give a truer and surer insight into reality. It has to link itself to the spiritual realizations of saints and

prophets. It is true that intellectual categories fail utterly to mirror faithfully the revelations of spirit and that silence is more expressive of Truth than words. Yet the reason of man yearns for a glimpse of Truth. And the spiritual experiences afford the intellect the only ground for reading a comprehensive and coherent meaning running through the recurring flux of phenomena. The intellect will, to be sure, continue to doubt and despair, for there will not be complete satisfaction of the entire personality unless he comes face to face with Truth in deep meditation. And let it not be supposed that such a philosophy will always remain static, for it will be ever active squaring the newer discoveries of science with the inviolable truths of spirit.

### SOCIAL LEGISLATION

A number of bills affecting the Hindu Society have been introduced in the Legislative Assembly. This has occasioned widespread reactions of a mixed character in the press. Many objections have been raised as regards their general character and detailed provisions. Whether the bills, when they become acts, will serve any useful purpose or not may be left to the judgment of readers, who are well acquainted with their nature and objects. In addition to such detailed and special criticisms, however, exception has been taken by a section of the people to the general principle of enactment of any social legislation whatsoever. It is claimed that society and religion should be outside the sphere of activity of politicians and that all along her history Indian society enjoyed immunity from political interference. It is worth examining the claim. Can any society claim to lie outside political influence? It is idle to claim that

politics should have nothing to do with society. It is taking too narrow and unreal view of state to ascribe to it mere police functions only. Even in the best days of a by-gone individualism and *laissez-aller* government was much more than a police affair concerned with the maintenance of vested interests alone. It is good to say with Thoreau that the least governed are the best governed, and it is true that some of the most revolutionary political thinkers look forward to a society where there will be no government. But as long as the brute and the savage lurk in man, there will always be need of governmental action for the maintenance of justice. Indeed so far as one can see there will be ever increasing interference in social and other matters by governments in future. Everybody has a right to hold to his peculiar belief in social and religious matters, but when such beliefs seek to express and perpetuate themselves in degrading customs to the harm of many government must interfere, and it will interfere if it is not identified with the interests of the dominant class.

Looking back to the past of India also we find that it is useless to claim that society was not interfered with politically. It is true that in olden days in India as, to a more or less extent, everywhere the initiative for change in social and religious matters come from leaders of society and religion who were rarely endowed with political authority. They enjoyed a large measure of autonomy in social and other matters. But what that autonomy signified and what claim has it for a new charter of life? In days when wisdom sought poverty and privilege came to it unasked, when the spirit was not frozen up by cold custom and when the wise ruled like Plato's philosopher-kings a great measure of general weal was attained.

But in days of degradation it meant the rule of a chosen few or a class who blinded by self-interest forged all sorts of fetters for the under dog. The social rule derived its strength from the fact that the political authority was always there to enforce such social legislation by its powerful sanction. Though the social leaders did not wield political authority there was a close bond of interest between them and those who held political power. The mass had no voice. It is difficult to imagine they were content under it. Quite apart from this there was a good deal of social and religious legislation directly by the political authority which felt itself strong to dispense with such an alliance and tradition. At present the political power has changed hands, and with this the old association between leaders of society and men in political authority has been divorced. Under an alien government the long suppressed voice has to some extent become articulate. It is clamouring for change which is bound to come. When social leaders merely look on while millions groan under oppression, it is futile to cry down political agitators and demand that society should be left undisturbed. Political agitators sometimes turn out to be good social reformers. Leadership is slipping from the hands of an almost fossilized dominant class. With the opening out of equal opportunities to influence and power the top dog is going down and the influence of the multitude is being felt in all matters. Government after all is the enforcement of the will of the dominant class, and with the advent of democracy it will be the enforcement of the will of the majority. There is much in the past which has to be remembered and learnt, but it is madness to try to bring back the entire past as it was, for the past never returns.

## PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ON

### RAMKRISHNA MISSION

While addressing the students of the Ramkrishna Mission Students' Home, Madras, on the 7th of October last Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru made the following observations on the activities of the Ramkrishna Mission :

"I have been going about travelling from place to place, from city to city, and from province to province, and one of the surprising things I came across was to find these efficient, well-organized, enormous Homes of Service run by the Ramkrishna Mission. They carry on quietly their work without much advertisement, and that is why, perhaps,

in this world of advertisements, it surprises one to find these big institutions functioning quietly, silently, and efficiently. Whenever any catastrophe occurs, such as, earthquakes and floods, many people shout about, run up there and do rescue work, and yet I have found almost always the most efficient agency doing service has been the Ramkrishna Mission. I must confess I was not even aware that in Madras City there was this great institution. I have come here and been taken round. I have been impressed more and more with not only the solid buildings that have been put up, but the whole background of this institution, which background I have found to be the common background of all these Ramkrishna Mission institutions."

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**GITA RAHASYA OR THE SCIENCE OF KARMA YOGA (IN 2 VOLS).** By BALA GANGADHAR TILAK. Translated by Bhalchandra Sitaram Sukthankar, M.A., LL.B. Published for Tilak Bros. by R. B. Tilak, Lokamanya Tilak Mandir, 568, Narayan Peth, Poor City. Pp. LXXX (Vol. I)+XLVIII (Vol. II)+1,210+123. Price Vol. I Rs. 6. (In India). Vol. II Rs. 4. (In India).

The publishers deserve warm congratulations for bringing out the English translation of Tilak's inestimable work, the *Gita Rahasya*, for the benefit of the English knowing public. The work hardly needs any introduction to the Indian readers. It has already been translated into over half a dozen vernaculars of India and has run into several editions in some. The influence the work has exerted upon the thought and lives of a numerous reading public in north India is profound, though not so apparent. This is testimony enough to the greatness and excellence of the work which has attained the position of a classic in its original Marathi. It is no exaggeration to say that it stands as a monument to not only Tilak's greatness but also to the Maratha genius.

In some respects the Marathas are the Germans of India. And the work under review shows at its best the outstanding qualities of Maratha scholarship, deep painstaking labour, and profound thoroughness which are usually associated with German learning in Europe.

Tilak tried to combine some of the noble elements of the traditional Indian culture in his person. Indian civilization has always kept *Sreyas* (*summum bonum*) in the forefront of all human aims and endeavours. Accordingly it has attempted to regulate the worldly activities of man in a way which would facilitate the realization of the Supreme Goal of human life. Here all activities have been based upon a metaphysical basis. Hence the greatest social and political reformers in India have been persons who made *Sreyas* the aim of life. The tradition remains yet unbroken. Tilak who rose to be an All-India leader on the eve of his life fell into love with the *Gita* early in his career and sought to mould his life according to his understanding of the teachings of that work. Right through his eventful career he tried to follow what he felt to be the message of the *Gita*. And after Tilak

Gandhi, upon whom has fallen Tilak's mantle in the political field, has made the *Gītā* the ideal code of his life. The work is thus written by a man who took no mere academic interest in it but was deeply exercised over the problem of duty and non-duty and the ultimate aim of human life. One, therefore, finds in the work a spirit of devotion, a sincerity of purpose and a strength of conviction which are sure to impress the reader and fire him with inspiration. It will evoke regard for Hindu culture in doubting minds, and every Hindu is sure to derive immense benefit from its perusal.

The work embodies Tilak's mature judgment about the character, teaching and historical significance of the *Gītā*, formed after a period of close and deep study spread over several decades. It is indeed the study of the *Gītā* which made him dive into his far-reaching Vedic researches. Tilak's main contention is that the *Gītā* preaches the gospel of energism (Karma Yoga) for the Enlightened as well as the unenlightened. The *Gītā* of course refers to other paths which lead to realization such as Pātanjala Yoga and Renunciation of works, but he maintains that the gospel of energism has been given the place of honour and that the Lord enjoins the path of action on the Enlightened for the benefit of humanity (Lokasamgraha). The *Gītā* strikes a new note which is not to be found in the Upanishad, namely, the promulgation of the doctrine of Desireless Action on a devotional basis as a means to Realization. The germs of the new doctrine are, to be sure, found in the *Vedas*. But though we find Religion of Works in the *Vedas* we do not find the clear enunciation of the path of Desireless Action and though devotion to God is clearly found in the *Vedas* nowhere we find devotion to Parameswara in human form. The *Gītā* also created a new synthesis between the Vedānta and the Sāmkhya system. Vedāntists of earlier date all totally ignore the Sāmkhya, but the author of the *Gītā* has accepted the Sāmkhya theory of the evolution of the cosmic process on the basis of the Vedānta metaphysics. It can hardly be disputed that the central teaching of the *Gītā* is Desireless Action as a means to Realization, keeping in view not only what is found in the work but also the occasion and circumstances of its preaching. The *Gītā* undoubtedly prescribes the path of Action for the unenlightened. But it will be difficult to concede to Tilak that the Lord compul-

sorily enjoins the ordinary (Laukika) actions even upon the Enlightened. It is easy to see, remembering the historical background, that the *Gītā* was preached first at a time of cultural crisis when all and sundry bent towards the path of Renunciation regardless of the fact whether they were fit for it or not. Hence the *Gītā* taught that by the selfless performance of the duties of one's station of life one could attain Salvation (Moksha). Keeping in mind also the person addressed to it will be unwise to extend the generalization to all. The *Gītā* was not taught for the benefit of the Enlightened nor even for their guidance. The Enlightened do work for the benefit of humanity even if they only sit and stand by. The question of duty is impertinent in connection with them even as it is so in connection with the Lord (Na me parthāsti kartabyam trisu lokesu kadāchana. G. 3. 22). The Enlightened view the world from a different plane; their idea of Lokasamgraha is different from that of the unenlightened. Without helping to carry on the cosmic process in a gross way they benefit the world in a far better and more enduring manner by silently disseminating honesty, purity and knowledge by thought and word. The greatest mystics of the world were the greatest reformers. Though they renounced worldly life they did not sit idle but scattered blessings like the wind of spring all around. The all-embracing love of a Buddha or a Christ has energized thousands and hundreds of thousands for centuries and millenniums into most fruitful actions for the benefit of humanity. And thanks to their renunciation and love issuing out into finest moral sentiments and behaviour the world is a far better place to live in today than it was 3 millenniums ago.

The greater part of the work is devoted to the examination of the solution of the ethical problem as found in the *Gītā*. The *Gītā* is a great science of ethics. Tilak examines the grounds upon which the materialists have sought to erect an ethical structure and finds them faulty or inadequate. The only sure basis of an enduring ethics is the metaphysical doctrine of spiritual benefit. The metaphysics of the *Gītā* and the Sāmkhya theory of cosmic evolution are fully dealt with. The precise meanings of important terms in the *Gītā* are clearly and logically brought out. The philosophy of Devotion adumbrated in the *Gītā* is also adequately treated. It is impossible to indicate the

comprehensive nature and the excellence of the work as a whole in a review. The reader must become acquainted with the original. Tilak's historical considerations will be found interesting and valuable. He is rightly of opinion that the *Gītā* forms an integral part of the original Mahābhārata. He adduces grounds, not to be lightly dismissed, for the belief that the Bhāgavata religion was responsible for the introduction of the devotional element into Buddhism in the form of Mahāyāna Buddhism and into Judaism in the form of Christianity. His ascription of the Brahma-Sutras to the same author who composed the *Gītā* would, however, jar on many if only because the Brahma-Sutras refute and ignore the Sāṃkhyan theory of cosmic evolution which is accepted in the *Gītā* though upon a Vedāntic basis.

Finally, a word for the translation. The translator has attained a very high success in his work. The rendering is always lucid and smooth and can be followed without any effort whatever.

**EVEREST: THE CHALLENGE.** By Sir Francis Younghusband. *Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd. 35 36 Paternoster Row, London, E. C. 4. Pp. 240. Price \$12/6 net.*

The mysterious and the unknown, the mighty and the inaccessible have always thrown a challenge to the spirit of adventure in man. They have prompted him to brave the most dreadful dangers and to wrest ever newer victories from a defiant nature. Slowly but progressively, however, nature is unfolding her secrets to the indomitable spirit of man. The Alps and the Andes have been conquered, the Poles no longer hide any mystery from him, but the most dominant physical feature on the face of the earth, the Everest in the Himalayas, has up to now successfully mocked his impudent attempt to stand on its summit. It is, however, plain that it will not be able much longer to withstand successfully the persistent attack of man. Though the third expedition has failed, the climbers thrice attained to a height of over 28,000 ft. (twice in the same year during the second expedition and once during the first), that is to say, came to an altitude only a thousand feet less than that of the peak itself. Should the necessary permissions be forthcoming, the Everest will not long remain unconquered.

The work under review traces the genesis of the idea of climbing the Everest and

briefly recounts the story of the first two expeditions; it also sets out the results achieved and the future prospects. We have along with these short accounts of the German and the British expeditions to the Kamet, the Trisul peaks and the basin of the Nandā Devi. The author is one who knows the Himalayas intimately; in fact he was born in them. He spent years in them, crossing and recrossing the chain several times. He is also one of those who actively fostered the Everest 'idea'. During the three years of his presidency of the Royal Geographical Society he made the Everest venture the chief feature of his term of office. Though the expeditions have failed so far as their main object is concerned, a number of extremely valuable results have been obtained, quite apart from the fact that 28,000 ft. still constitutes the highest altitude attained by any man till now. Everest climbing has shown man's wonderful capacity for slow adaptation. It was supposed that man could not do without oxygen above 20,000 ft. and that he could hardly sleep there. Experience has, however, proved that if man does not rush the mountains but approaches the higher altitudes only by slow degrees he can dispense with oxygen at a much higher altitude than 20,000 ft. In fact it is believed that he will even be able to reach the summit of Everest without it. As regards sleep Smythe slept soundly for 13 hours at a height of 27,400 ft. Not the least among other results achieved are the growth of a spirit of comradeship between the climbers and the hillmen serving as porters, and the awakening of a genuine spirit of adventure among the latter.

To describe the work as a mere description of difficult mountain climbing would, however, be doing great injustice to the author. The work is more than a bare recital of facts and conclusions; it is a philosophy of the mighty Himalayas. The author writes as a mystic and philosopher. The challenge of the Himalayas is not to the heroic nature of man and his passion for adventure alone; it is an invitation to his spiritual being to rise above his surroundings and to feel the unity with nature. "And the attempt to reach the summit of the highest mountain in the world may be taken as symbolical of this striving in the heart of all living things to do something more than only adapt themselves to their surroundings: to stand superior to them. 'I am, as the crown of creation, in striving not merely to adapt himself to

the loftiest regions, but to rise in spirit above them, is surpassing himself and reaching upward to a higher level of being." A travel in the Himalayas is no mere expedition, it is a pilgrimage. The stupendous size of the mountains, the majesty of the peaks, the infinite beauty and variety of the rolling snow-capped chains and the flora and fauna are sure to strike the deep spiritual chords of a traveller in this holy land. And as one "has become more at ease among the Himalayan giants and been able to collect himself and sum up his experiences, he has felt something in the mountains corresponding with something within himself. The more profoundly he has meditated on this the deeper has grown the correspondence. And the deeper the correspondence has grown the more overwhelming has been the beauty which he beholds.

"The beauty on the face of the mountains is but the outward expression of the Motive Power at work in the heart of the world. And to put himself in ever increasing intimacy of communion with this Fountain Source of Things will, from that time forth, be his constant endeavour.

"The creatures' struggle for mere existence will then be over and his true life have begun. Man will begin to feel the connection and continuity of his own life with the life of Nature, and to see the real universe behind the universe of outward appearance. He will seek to deepen this sense of unity with Nature, and as he succeeds so will his joy increase: he will feel himself exalted to a higher order of being.

"Thus will he take the challenge of Everest to heart and in his own due time give a ready answer."

In this way the author feels the Himalayas will in future exercise a tremendous spiritual influence upon mankind, as they have already done upon the Hindus. The expeditions are paving a way to such an exercise. We have read the work with interest, and we are sure readers will derive great pleasure and profit from this epic story of man's physical and spiritual venture, written almost with a devout spirit. A slight inaccuracy has, however, crept into the work. "Himalaya" writes the author in the preface, "is the short for Himá-láya, snow-abode." As a matter of fact it is a combination of the words Hima+Álaya, meaning of course snow-abode. The book contains a number of excellent illustrations.

**FREEDOM AND CULTURE.** By Sir S. Radhakrishnan. G. N. Natesan & Co., Madras. Pp. 158. Price Re. 1.

The book comprises a selection from ten lectures of Sir Radhakrishnan, the majority of which are addresses delivered at various Indian Universities. They deal with a variety of subjects. It is accordingly no easy matter for the reviewer to give an idea of the book as a whole, for the sort of unity which one finds in a work dealing with a single subject is not to be expected in it. Nevertheless there are some common strands running through this variegated texture, which supply some sort of cohesion to the whole. All through his writings stands revealed the deep love which the Professor bears for his motherland. He longs for a better, freer India. The social, political and economic abuses and injustices sting him to the quick. They are an outrage on reason and sentiment. He exhorts his student audience to bring about a better state of things by the cultivation of freedom of outlook and behaviour. If he is impatient with cramping traditions and senseless iniquities he is no doctrinaire radical. He believes and glories in the past of India. But here again he is no conservative. What he pleads for is a conservatism which is constructive. He is eager that the past of India should be adequately studied not because the past has to be revived, but because the past lays down the condition of our future progress. The past, moreover, affords inspiration for reform. Before the age of scholasticism descended like a pall of gloom upon her, in the middle ages, India showed a wonderful dynamism in spirit and action, ever ready to create and accept new elements of truth. "If we study the history of Indian culture from the beginning of its career somewhere in the valley of the Indus four or five millenniums ago down till today, the one characteristic that pervades it throughout its long growth is its elasticity and ability to respond to new needs." Our present ills are of our own making. We cannot blame others for our political and economic subjection. If India wants to rise she must sweep away the abuses which have brought her to the present state of humiliation. Society must be built on equalitarian principles. He is an inveterate believer in democracy. Real democracy is not something related to government alone. It is an attitude of life expressing itself in equality

of behaviour in all walks of life. Freedom of outlook alone can save India. He is no reforming enthusiast who believes that great things can be done by paper resolutions and counting of votes. Reform must begin with the transformation of the individual. Addressing the all-India Women's Conference

in 1933 he said: "Social reform will follow if you undertake the less exacting task of individual re-making." Dr. Radhakrishnan combines facility of expression with clarity of thought, and it is an enjoyment and a profit to follow him. We, however, wish the price were a little less.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### SRI RAMAKRISHNA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

#### SAN FRANCISCO AND OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

The Vedanta Society of San Francisco devoted an entire week to the celebration of the birthday centenary of Sri Ramakrishna. Two elaborate public meetings were held in San Francisco, in addition to a more informal and intimate one for those deeply interested in the Master and His message, and one meeting across the Bay in the city of Oakland. A booklet on the life of Sri Ramakrishna was published and given away, and extensive publicity was given in the various local newspapers. Attendance at the three San Francisco meetings totalled over six hundred and at the Oakland meeting, 172. In addition, the auspicious centenary day was made the occasion for the dedication of the new Library and Reading Room of the Society.

On the 24th of February last, the actual day of the Master's birthday centenary, Swami Ashokananda conducted special worship in the newly-established chapel on the second floor, which was filled with a great profusion of all varieties of flowers sent by the devotees of Sri Ramakrishna. In the evening was held a special meeting, attended by some 140 students and members personally invited. Swami Ashokananda opened the meeting with prayer, after which a Sanskrit hymn to Sri Ramakrishna was sung by Mrs. T. J. Allan. The Swami then gave a brief talk on some of the intimate details of Sri Ramakrishna's life.

After his talk, the Swami invited the guests to visit the new Library Room. A fine collection of books was arranged for the opening of the Library, covering such pertinent subjects as Indian history and culture, philosophy of various schools and ages, philosophy of science, etc., and it is hoped

that the collection will be added to by interested students and friends.

Inspection of the Library was followed by the showing of stereopticon pictures of the Temple grounds at Dakshineswar, the Monastery at Belur, and the Ganges, all interestingly described by the Swami. Refreshments were then served and the programme was concluded at about eleven o'clock. Throughout the evening the Temple auditorium in which the meeting was held was pervaded by a vibrant atmosphere of joy and peacefulness.

On the following day, at the time of his usual mid-week lecture, Swami Ashokananda took as his subject, "How Sri Ramakrishna Realized God". The Temple auditorium was beautifully decorated with large masses of flowers which were augmented by many contributions from the devotees. In addition to the flowers, incense and candles burned before the large painting of the Master. Every available seat in the auditorium was taken, people stood in the rear of the hall and on the steps inside the entrance, and some were even seated in the passageway at the back of the speaker's platform. In all, about two hundred people were present.

The evening was opened by prayer by Swami Ashokananda. Then Miss Carol Weston, accompanied by Miss Dora Blaney, gave a violin solo, and Mrs. T. J. Allan sang a hymn to Sri Ramakrishna preceding Swami Ashokananda's talk. In his talk the Swami described the life of Sri Ramakrishna up to the beginning of his ministry in 1873, giving in detail many of the various paths of spiritual practice which he followed. At the conclusion, Mrs. H. D. B. Soule sang a solo, accompanied by Miss Blaney and Miss Weston. Refreshments were again served and the guests were invited to attend the final centenary celebration the following Sunday afternoon.



The concluding reception in San Francisco was the most elaborate of all, beginning at two o'clock in the afternoon of Sunday on the 1st March last and ending shortly after five. This meeting was held in the auditorium of the Century Club, a well-known women's club in the centre of San Francisco. The usual Sunday morning lecture by Swami Ashokananda was not given on this day. About three hundred people filled the large hall before the stage, on which stood a remarkably striking photograph of Sri Ramakrishna enlarged to life size.

As at the previous meetings, Swami Ashokananda opened the programme with prayer, after which he welcomed the guests in the name of the Master. He then read a translation of the beautiful and inspiring hymn to Sri Ramakrishna which is sung each evening at the worship in the monasteries of the Ramakrishna Order, afterwards chanting it in Sanskrit. This was followed by a violin solo by Miss Marie Dudley accompanied by Miss Dora Blaney and then by a piano solo by Prof. H. D. B. Soule. Mr. Albert Wollberg then read a paper prepared by Mr. A. T. Clifton, Jr., in which the latter described his visit to India last year at the time of Sri Ramakrishna's festival. A violin solo by Miss Tawara, a Japanese girl, accompanied by Miss Blaney, preceded Swami Ashokananda's talk, "The Message of Sri Ramakrishna to the Modern World".

The Swami's talk was followed by a violin duet by Miss Carol Weston and Miss Kazue Tawara, accompanied by Miss Dora Blaney. Each guest was then presented with a hand-somely-printed brochure on the life of Sri Ramakrishna by Swami Ashokananda, entitled, "Sri Ramakrishna, the God-Man of India", and the programme was closed with the serving of refreshments.

The same evening Swami Ashokananda held another meeting in Oakland, across the Bay, at which 172 guests were present to hear the Swami speak again on the Master, under the title "Sri Ramakrishna, the God-Man of India". Refreshments were also served at the conclusion of the meeting, and each guest received a copy of the brochure on Sri Ramakrishna.

#### COLOMBO

The citizens of Colombo celebrated the Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna on the 7th of September last. The programme of the celebration among other items, included special Puja, Homa, and devotional music.

The first sitting of the Convention of Religions held under the Chairmanship of Mr. Justice T. A. Akbar was the most outstanding function in which votaries of different faiths spoke on the sublime teachings of their prophets. Swami Avinashananda, at the very outset, gave a picturesque survey of the achievements of different people in the domain of spirituality and made a passing reference to the immense significance of the Centenary Movement.

The distinguished speakers like Bhikkhu Narada, Rev. Ivan S. Corea, Mr. H. Olotsu, Mr. H. M. Desai, Mr. N. K. Choksi represented Buddhism, Christianity, Shintoism, Jainism and Zoroastrianism respectively. The president in winding up the interesting discussion of the day incidentally paid a high encomium to the selfless services of the Ramakrishna Mission and opined that a real spiritual outlook can alone strike a death-knell to all squabbles that are proving a serious menace to world-peace.

On the following day a conference of faiths had its second sitting under the presidency of Swami Avinashananda in which Prof. C. Suntharalingam, Mr. T. B. Jayah, Mr. S. Lilaram and Dr. T. Nalinatham spoke on Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, and Theosophy respectively. Swami Asangananda spoke a few words on Sri Ramakrishna and the Harmony of Religions. A Ladies' meeting was, also, organized, which Swami Avinashananda addressed.

#### SURAT

The birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated on the 27th and 28th of August last. The main part of the programme was a conference of religions with Swami Vishwanandaji in the chair. There were speakers on Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and Jainism. The different speakers while explaining the main principles and aspects of their own religion emphasized the underlying unity, as all religions had one aim of taking humanity towards Divinity. The next day, the Jayanti of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated when Prof. A. K. Trivedi of Baroda presided. Prominent persons like Mr. Nandath Dixit, Principal Dabu, Principal Benson, Mr. Saiyad Munadi, Prof. M. P. Deve, Prof. K. S. Trivedi, Prof. Saiyad Zilani, Mr. Kanaiyalal Desai, and Dr. K. H. Vora took part on both days. The public of Surat evinced great interest in the celebrations. Diwan Bahadur C. M. Gandhi was the chairman of

the local celebration committee and Mr. C. A. Mehta acted as Secretary.

#### AHMEDABAD

The celebration of the Birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna was held in August last. It continued for about a week. On the first day an inter-religious conference was held, Principal A. B. Dhruva, retired Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the Benares Hindu University, presiding, at which exponents of different faiths, spoke on their respective religious view-points. On the 2nd day another public meeting was held which was presided over by Swami Vishwananda. Mandoleswar Swami Jayendrapuriji presided over the third day's meeting at which speeches were made by different speakers on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. On the fourth day, a largely attended ladies' meeting was held under the presidency of Lady Vidyagouri.

A meeting of the Harijans was held at Britampura at which Prof. Athavle gave a very illuminating lecture on the ideal of Hinduism.

#### SRI RAMKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, MADRAS

##### REPORT FOR 1935

The Institution stepped into the 31st year of its existence in 1935. Besides the Home proper, the Institution runs two High Schools and an Industrial School.

*The Home Proper :* At the end of the year under review there were 165 students in the Home, of whom 18 enjoyed government scholarships, 27, school and college concessions and 23, other special scholarships. Two students on the completion of their course in Mechanical Engineering have joined workshop apprenticeship elsewhere. One student of the Home was selected by the Government of India as a stipendiary apprentice in the Gun and Shell Factory in Cossipore. One ex-student became successful in the last I.C.S. examination in London.

The Home imparts an all-round training to the inmates by providing for games, physical exercises, gardening, moral and religious instruction. It maintains a good library and a Reading Room and conducts a musical class for those who have a talent for it.

*The Residential High School :* Besides its residential character, other special features are the employment of the verna-

cular as the medium of instruction, teaching of Sanskrit up to the Form IV and an obligatory course of manual training including carpentry, weaving and rattan work. In addition, it carries on several extra-curricular activities in the shape of excursions to places of interest, conducting a library, a boys' union and three magazines for boys and maintaining a voluntary corps for looking after sanitation.

*The Mambalam Branch High School :* The strength of the school was about 750 at the end of the year. Sanskrit is taught as a compulsory subject up to Form III. The medium of instruction for the teaching of non-language subjects in the lower Forms is the vernacular of the pupils. Provisions have been made for games and physical exercise. There are also a library, a laboratory and a museum. It runs a hostel on the lines of the Home proper. Its strength rose to 30 in 1935.

*The Industrial School :* It had 38 boys on its rolls at the end of the year. It trains student for the diploma in automobile engineering approved by the Government in 1934. The course extends for five years, of which the last year is spent in the Jubilee Workshop which is run on commercial lines.

*Finance :* The total receipt during the year amounted to Rs. 10,851-15-3 while the total disbursements came up to Rs. 46,469-10-3 resulting in a deficit of Rs. 5,617-11-0 which was met from the Revenue Reserve. The rapid development of the industrial side and the consequent increase in the strength of the Home account for the deficit, and the necessity to stabilize the income so as to meet the growing needs of the Institution is becoming more and more imperative. Generous patrons and well-wishers can place it above all pecuniary embarrassment by adding richly to the Endowment Fund.

#### REPORT OF THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION, CEYLON BRANCH

##### FOR THE YEAR ENDING JUNE, 1935

The activities of the Colombo Branch of the Mission are twofold, general and educational. During the year under report it carried on weekly discourses on the *Gita*, occasional discourses on the lives of saints and also conducted two other religious classes outside the Ashrama in the town. Instructions on meditation, on the *Upanishads* and the Saiva Siddhanta works were given to a

few select persons. A class on Yoga physical culture was also held from time to time. Besides, the Swamis of the Mission delivered a number of lectures both in Tamil and English in and outside the city of Colombo. The Ashrama maintains a fairly equipped library and a reading room which were well utilized by the public during the year.

The educational activities of the Mission comprise the management of 12 schools, of which 3 are English and the running of an orphanage. The total number of pupils attending the schools was 2,285 and the total number of teachers 74. The strength of the orphanage was 42 at the end of the year. Great attention is paid to the health of the inmates of the orphanage.

The present needs of the Ashrama are (1) a Temple, a Lecture Hall, and a Building for the accommodation of monks and guests, (2) Funds for the maintenance of the Ashrama, (3) Funds for educational work.

Contributions will be received by the Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission (Ceylon Branch), Colombo.

#### SRI RAMAKRISHNA GURUKUL AND VIDYA MANDIR, THE VILANGANS, TRICHUR

REPORT FROM JANUARY, 1933, TO 31ST MARCH,  
1935

Quite unobtrusively the Ramakrishna Ashrama at Trichur, Cochin State, has been carrying on extremely valuable work among the depressed classes of the locality. The real constructive nature of the work which the Ashrama is carrying on for the down-trodden villagers will be apparent from a short account of the different kinds of its activity. The educational activities were conducted during the period under report through the following institutions:

(1) *The Gurukul*. It is a residential institution for boys. It began seven years ago with only one boy on its rolls, but its strength gradually rose to 38 at the close of the academic year ending 31st March, 1935. The institution is mainly intended for the Harijans although a few poor pupils of the higher castes are also admitted so as to give the Harijans the benefit of association.

(2) *The Matri Mandir*. It is a residential section for girls and is mainly intended for the Harijans. There were 12 girls on its rolls at the close of the academic year ending in March, 1935.

(3) *The Vidya Mandir*. It is the school where boys and girls, residential as well as day scholars, receive their instruction. The work of the Vidya Mandir is carried under the following main heads: cultural, industrial, agricultural, commercial, civic and spiritual. Among the special features of the education imparted in the Vidya Mandir are, (i) the special attention paid to the culture of the mother-tongue, (ii) the teaching of Sanskrit, (iii) the imparting of a working knowledge of Hindi, (iv) supplementary industrial and vocational training, (v) regular religious classes, (vi) training in fine arts such as music and folk dance, (vii) teaching of History, Geography and Civics in a manner conducive to the growth of patriotic sentiment, (viii) encouragement of indigenous rural games and physical culture, and (ix) instruction in practical sciences useful in everyday life. The Cultural Section consists of the Vernacular Primary School and the English Lower Secondary School. The Industrial Section consists of two departments: the Industrial School recognized by the Government and the Vocational Section. The Industrial School trains students in cloth weaving, mat-weaving, drawing, needlework, music and folk dances, and coaches them for the Government Industrial Examinations. During the period under report there were 21 boys and 6 girls in the school of which 16 were Harijans. The Vocational Section teaches a variety of domestic arts and crafts such as cooking, house-keeping, laundering, hand-milling, fencing, thatching, etc. The Agricultural Section provides part time training in gardening and agriculture along with general education. The Commercial Section includes the Harijan Co-operative Stores dealing in provisions and school requisites, and run by the school children under the guidance of the teachers. The Ashrama also conducts a Sunday class in the Central Jail at Viyyur for the benefit of the Hindu prisoners.

(4) *The Reading Room and Library*.—The Gurukul library contains a fair collection of books in English, Sanskrit, Hindi, Malayalam and Tamil dealing with different subjects.

Besides these activities the Ashrama takes measures to enforce the observance of personal cleanliness by the Harijan boys. It has also secured a plot of land from the Government for the purpose of a healthy Harijan colony. It also affords economic relief to the needy Harijans and has started an Employment Bureau for securing jobs for

the poor Harijans. The needs for the Gurukul are buildings for boys and workers, girls and workers, for holding classes for dispensary and also educational, vocational equipment etc. Funds are also needed for the maintenance of poor boys and girls.

Total receipts and disbursements during the period under report were Rs. 19,661-10-8 and Rs. 19,324-10-6 respectively.

### THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, RANGOON

#### REPORT FOR 1935

The Ramkrishna Mission Sevashrama, Rangoon, has been rendering most useful service to the citizens of Rangoon for the last fifteen years. The phenomenal rise of the Institution from obscure and humble beginnings to its present important position in Burma reflects the great usefulness of the service which it is rendering. The figure of the different kinds of patients treated will give some idea of the extensive nature of its work. During the year under report, the total number of new cases treated was 83,194. These patients did not belong exclusively to the city of Rangoon, a considerable number of them coming from the suburbs and from some remote districts of Burma. The number of patients admitted in the Indoor Department during the year was 2,673 men, 926 women, and 147 children. The aggregate of the daily totals of attendance came up to 32,120 men, 7,665 women, and 1,265 children; the average daily attendance being 88 men, 21 women and 3 children. The average period of stay in the Hospital in each case was ten days. Some chronic cases had to be kept for months. At the Out-patients' Department the total number of attendance came up to 1,95,751 including repeated cases. The average daily attendance was 348 men, 112 women, and 76 children, i.e. a total of 536.

The year under report was a record year in the history of the Sevashrama. There was not only an all-round increase in the number of indoor and outdoor patients but also a number of major improvements were carried out. The chief among the improvements were the opening of George V Silver Jubilee Ward by Sir Arthur Page, the late Chief Justice of Burma, and of the R. M. Das Laboratory by Sir H. L. Stephenson, K.C.S.I., the late Governor of Burma.

The total receipts and disbursements during the year were Rs. 59,968-0-7 and

Rs. 50,594-0-10 respectively, thus leaving a balance of Rs. 9,368-15-9.

The present needs of the Sevashrama are: (1) A building for X-ray treatment, the estimated approximate cost being Rs. 4,000-0-0; (2) X-ray apparatus and fittings costing about Rs. 12,000; (3) a separate kitchen for patients, cost being Rs. 4,000; (4) Workers' quarters, cost being Rs. 5,000; (5) a small steam laundry for washing hospital clothes, costing about Rs. 5,000. Donors may perpetuate the names of the departed ones by giving the full cost of any of the above requirements.

### THE RAMAKRISHNA SEVASHRAMA, SHYAMALA TAL, HIMALAYAS

#### REPORT FOR 1935

The Sevashrama was started in 1914 in the Vivekananda Ashrama, Shyamala Tal. It is situated at a height of 4,944 feet above sea-level, and at a distance of 12 miles from the nearest Railway Station of Tanakpur. Nestled in the deep Himalayan forests interspersed with groups of hamlets here and there, the Sevashrama has been the only source of medical relief to the helpless sufferers over a range of thirty miles. Many people often undertake a whole day's journey to receive the benefit of treatment in the Sevashrama. Moreover, the Sevashrama being located on the trade-route between Tibet and the plains, many Bhutias and members of other communities falling ill in the jungles and at Tanakpur and finding themselves helpless in a strange country go to the Sevashrama for treatment. Its usefulness in such an out of the way place where medical relief is otherwise not available can easily be imagined. A distinctive feature of the Ashrama is the treatment of some sorts of cattle diseases. The Dispensary has also accommodation for 6 indoor patients, though beds have still to be provided for.

The total number of patients treated during the year under report is 2,968 of which 2,956 were outdoor and 12 indoor. The total receipts and disbursements were Rs. 9,485-2-3 and 9,068-11-11 respectively.

The needs of the Dispensary are: (1) a Permanent Fund of not less Rs. 10,000 for placing the Institution on a sure footing. There is a nucleus of the Permanent Fund in the shape of Rs. 2,100. Endowment of beds may be made to perpetuate the memory of the departed ones. The endowment of a

bed costs only Rs. 800. (2) Funds for the upkeep of the Sevashrama.

#### VEDĀNTA WORK IN CENTRAL EUROPE REPORT FOR NOVEMBER, 1933—JANUARY, 1935

Swami Yatiswarananda writes from Switzerland:—

I came to Europe early in November 1933. After my stay for more than two years, I can now definitely say that the scope of our service for spreading the message of Vedānta is steadily increasing, though the progress is naturally very slow owing to many difficulties that stand in the way. New people are being drawn towards the movement. With them and those who have become already interested, study circles are being formed at some places, and the ideas are being carried to much wider circles by those who are being spiritually benefited and are coming to look upon the Movement as their own.

During the first year I spent three-fourths of the period at Wiesbaden having intensive studies, at first, with one group and then with two, usually having as much as ten classes or more a week. A very good nucleus has been formed there, and I have been fortunate in getting two or three highly gifted and spiritually minded devotees who have identified themselves with the cause, and who conduct the classes and carry on the work during my absence.

About the middle of August, 1934, I visited Switzerland and early in September I went to Vienna, the capital of Austria, and from there to Poland where I spent nearly two months. The lectures delivered by me in Ascona in Switzerland and in Cracow in Poland came to be translated in the German and Polish languages respectively and thus reached a much larger number of people than those who listened to me.

In the course of the year I was able to establish points of contact with many scholars and devotees in Germany, Switzerland and Poland, some of whom have already been and some others are going to be greatly helpful to our cause in those countries and elsewhere.

Of the second year beginning with November, 1934, I spent altogether some three months at Wiesbaden, working with the two old groups and also with one newly formed, and thus consolidated the work there. During the remaining nine months I have stayed mostly in Switzerland which

I am trying to make the basis for our work in Central Europe.

In January, 1935, I was able to start regular readings at St. Moritz and elsewhere, and conducted a number of classes every week for three months without any break. A small group of devotees became greatly interested and the most earnest of them continued the readings even when I was away.

In April, 1935, I visited Geneva and gave talks to large and small groups regularly, and also spoke to the members of the Society of Friends and Bahai International Bureau there. Beginnings of a permanent group were formed during my seven weeks' stay there. After I had left Geneva a friend wrote to me, "I feel you have made an excellent beginning in Geneva. After you had left, several people have asked me to lend them books, which I did, and I believe that when you come again, a small nucleus will have formed."

Here at Geneva I was fortunate in making the acquaintance of a lover of our cause,—Mon. Jean Herbert who has very nobly taken up the task of translating some of our literature into French and bringing the message to the doors of the French and French-reading people.

During my stay at Geneva, I visited the great savant Mon. Romain Rolland and his sister, to whom we owe a deep debt of gratitude for the great good they have done to our cause and to the world at large by bringing out the lives of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda and the Universal Gospel. In writing the works it was the object of Mon. Rolland to bring to Europe "the fruit of a new autumn, a new message of the Soul, the Symphony of India, bearing the name of Ramakrishna", and by so doing he wished to wet, as he says, "the lips of fever-stricken Europe with the blood of Immortality." So the great idealist was mightily pleased to know that, not to a small extent due to his great works, an ever-growing number of people in the West are becoming eager to get the universal teachings of the Vedānta and the message of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda in their "undiluted form" from the accredited representatives of the Order. With a great interest he and his sister inquired about the progress of our movement in the West as well as in India and other countries.

From Geneva I went to Wiesbaden for the third time about the second half of June,

1985. The stay was for a comparatively short period of three weeks. I gave a number of discourses and a number of talks to the members of the study circle and also learnt to my great delight that group studies were regularly held, and one by one new people are becoming interested and drawn towards the message through the instrumentality of the devotees.

From Wiesbaden I went to Campfer again during the second week of July and stayed there till the third week of October. As before I took up the classes at St. Moritz and Campfer, having usually three readings a week at each place. A few devotees came from other parts of Switzerland and also from Germany. Altogether some 15-20 people profited by these classes and also by the talks and interviews they had with me. During this period Swami Avyaktananda of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Vedānta Society, London, visited the Engadine, and we stayed together for three weeks. The Swami met the members of the group at St. Moritz and gave them a talk which was greatly appreciated.

Towards the end of October I came to Zürich for meeting Miss MacLeod—the great American friend of Swami Vivekananda and also of the movement bearing the name of the Master. The translation of some of the lectures etc. of Swami Vivekananda into German was long begun as a labour of love by two consecrated souls—Mrs. von Keller and Mrs. von Pelet who have translated and brought out a nice edition of the Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna in German. Miss MacLeod has very generously given the funds necessary for publishing the lectures of Swami Vivekananda, including the four *Yogas* and the *Inspired Talks*, etc. She has also made a decent contribution towards the bringing out of the above books in French, and the work has already been begun by Mon. Herbert with the help of one or two devoted friends.

It is fortunate that during the year of Sri Ramakrishna Centenary the first instalments of the publications in German and French are making their appearance, and the message is reaching a large circle of readers in all the countries of Europe where these two languages are more or less understood.

At Zürich I stayed for seven weeks and came to know quite a number of persons in various walks of life. I met some intellectuals including a few professors of the Uni-

versity and had interesting discussions with them on comparative religion and the universal message of Vedānta. I was fortunate in establishing points of contact also with some devotees who have become interested in our ideas and ideals through literature. Many of them want to learn of the methods of mind-control and meditation for which they are coming to have an increasing interest, but which, as they complained, were practically unknown alike to the teachers and followers of institutional religions. In the near future it is proposed to start study-circles with these spiritual-minded souls at Zürich and elsewhere.

Along with my attempts at sharing my ideas with the spiritual aspirants in Europe, I am also trying to study comparative mysticism and also analytical psychology in the light of Yoga. At Zürich I availed myself of the opportunity of listening to the renowned Prof. Jung. I have been reading some of his books in English and had the pleasure of meeting him more than a year back in Switzerland. He has read some of our literature, and felt, as he said, "particularly interested in my paper on 'Hindu Symbology.'" We had prolonged talks and discussions on Hindu spiritual topics—on the relationship between religion and philosophy, the different systems of Vedānta and the practical application of the Vedāntic ideals as embodied in the life of Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda and the movement founded by them.

I was filled with admiration to see how the great doctor keeps himself open to Truth and is ready to receive it from all sources through which it may come. This is a great lesson that all true seekers should always bear in mind and try to practise in actual life. There should be, of course, as Prof. Dr. Jung very rightly advocates, a sympathetic and yet critical and intelligent understanding of an idea before it can be accepted and assimilated in the truest sense.

From Zürich I went to Wiesbaden towards the end of December, 1935, and spent happily my third Christmas with the friends there who in 1933 invited me to Germany and were thus instrumental in starting the regular Vedānta Work for the first time in Europe.

After Christmas I started the usual classes and had 6 readings a week, besides giving interviews to old and new devotees. In one month we were able to do two months' work, making substantial progress in our studies. As before the notes were taken down and

typed copies distributed to each member of the group. One of the prominent devotees here is conducting a new class in German for the benefit of those who have become interested recently.

The message of Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda is being propagated in German-speaking countries through the medium of a German Monthly to which the devotees of our cause are contributing many articles and are rendering help in other ways.

Through correspondence I am in touch also with the devotees in Poland, who are going on satisfactorily with their work and are all increasing in strength. Thus the Vedānta message in Central Europe is progressing slowly and steadily through the grace of the Divine.

The expenses of my stay in Europe are being borne mostly by two or three of the devotees who with their limited resources are doing so in a spirit of great sacrifice and devotion. The whole of Central Europe is passing through a crisis. And there was a time when, after I had begun my work in Switzerland, I had to go through great financial uncertainties. We are deeply grateful to H. H. the Maharaja of Mysore for the generous help he has given in this hour of need to the cause.

In the near future, besides devoting some time at each of the different places where I have begun work already, I propose to visit Paris and other cities where also some interest has already been created and devotees are thinking of beginning some work of a permanent nature during this year of the centenary of the Master. Up till now I am doing only the pioneering work. A few devoted and highly gifted souls have fully identified themselves with the cause and some of them are giving all their available time and energy to it and are preparing themselves for greater service in future. Nuclei of libraries are being formed at different places. The number of those who are coming within the sphere of the influence of the movement and are being helped by it through literature, correspondence and personal contact is steadily growing and will greatly increase after all the proposed books are published in German, French, and other languages. So, as the trend of events clearly indicates, the Vedānta Movement inaugurated by Ramakrishna-Vivekananda has come to stay in Europe.

## FLOOD AND FAMINE RELIEF

### RAMKRISHNA MISSION'S ACTIVITIES

Swami Madhavananda of Ramkrishna Mission has issued the following:

Reports from our various centres in the famine-stricken areas of Bengal show that distress is still extremely acute. Recently we have greatly increased our relief measures to meet the situation. During the first week of October the Mission has helped 7,933 men and women from the different centres with 381 mds. 6 srs. of rice, besides old and new cloths. Of this amount Gatura, Jhapa and Nakipur centres of the Khulna district distributed 191 mds. 7 srs. amongst 3,698 recipients. From the Joyrambati centre of the Bankura district 1,246 persons were helped with 46 mds. 13 srs. Several villages of the Hooghly district are included in this area. The Lakshmibati centre of the Birbhum district and the Mashra centre of the same district, comprising a number of villages of the Sonthal Parganas, distributed 45 mds. 3½ srs. and 44 mds. 18 srs. respectively amongst 917 and 889 recipients.

The Chaukhola centre of the Midnapur district run by our Tamluk branch helped 273 persons with 20 mds. 21 srs. Relief amounting to 17 mds. 28 srs. and 15 mds. 5 srs. respectively was also given to 461 and 449 persons from the Barjora and Pakhanna centres of the Bankura district managed by our Bankura branch during the period.

The flood relief work in Malda has been closed, but that in Arakan is continuing. In famine areas of Bengal the Mission is spending about Rs. 1,200/- per week at present.

The work will have to be continued for some weeks more in most of the above areas, particularly in the Khulna district, till the harvest brings in better conditions.

Our funds have almost exhausted, but the situation is still very grave and thousands need help to be saved from starvation and death. We therefore appeal again to the generous public to contribute to our funds. Contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged at any of the following addresses:--

- (1) The President, Ramkrishna Mission,  
P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah.
- (2) The Manager, Advaita Ashrama,  
4, Wellington Lane, Calcutta.

vidual's mind and character rather than upon informative, practical, and professional advantages. The article claims to be only one Western Sanskritist's impression of some effects which the study of Sanskrit has had on his own mental outlook. "If I were to try to sum up that effect in a word," observes Dr. Edgerton, "I should say it was humanizing."

The writer is not one of those who are biased in favour of European civilization as the highest form of culture yet evolved by man. While soaring far above the horizon of provincialism, he reveals the fact that men remote from Westerners in time, no less than in space, were after all men, in essentials not so very different from themselves; at the same time he immensely appreciates that Westerners need to know their own cultural ancestry in order to know themselves. To the people who believe that European civilization is intrinsically superior to any other and that it should be studied not only by Europeans, but by all human beings, because it is the highest type of civilization ever witnessed by man, Prof. Edgerton frankly and honestly points out as follows: "The study of Sanskrit has led me to the conviction that this claim cannot be proved. I do not say that it can be disproved, either. It seems to me, scientifically, incapable of either proof or disproof; and therefore I think an objective scholar should leave it out of account altogether, as having no scientific meaning or value. I believe further that few other humanistic fields are so well adapted as Sanskrit to bring Europeans to this realization.

"For this purpose it has certain obvious advantages over the study of so-called 'primitive' languages and cultures. For one thing, it is historic. To Europeans, there is something

respectable about a lengthy history; and 'primitive' peoples have practically no history. But the Indian people has a long and continuous history, relatively independent of outside influences. In this respect it is rivalled only by the Chinese.

"With the exception of the Chinese again, there is no people on earth, outside of the European cultural sphere, which can show as many products of intellectual culture of the sort which Europeans consider marks of a high civilization. Perhaps it is unreasonable to set so great a value on such matters, and on length of history. Perhaps the 'primitivists' are right in suggesting that the 'savage' is as well off as civilized man, or better, and that his *mores* are as admirable, abstractly considered. The fact remains that few Europeans will be found willing to admit it. They will not respect a foreign culture unless it appears to them 'civilized'. But no one who has any real knowledge of Sanskrit literature and Indian history can doubt that the Hindus have been highly civilized for millennia, and that their intellectual products compare on the whole very favourably with those of Europe, even judged by European standards. If in modern times the technological advances of Europe have surpassed anything that India has achieved, this is a very recent development, and may be regarded as counter-balanced by other features which, in the opinion of many thoughtful Europeans, are at least as important, humanly speaking. As examples may be mentioned the religious tolerance for which India is historically famous, and on the whole justly so, in contrast with Europe, which cannot match Asoka, for instance; and the ethical principle of *Ahimsa*, the sanctity of all life, which even as an ideal can hardly be said to exist in the West, and which despite all



imperfections in its observance has been a real humanizing force in India for many centuries."

It is gratifying to note how a cultured Occidental like Dr. Edgerton has been impressed by the human value of Indian civilization that is embedded in Sanskrit literature the study of which can, according to him, bring one to a realization of the essential oneness of mankind. The human interest of Sanskrit literature was stressed long ago by Western Orientalists like Sir William Jones, Max Müller, H. H. Wilson, Sir Monier-Williams, and a host of others in the past. In the present, the interest is growing more and more intense from day to day among Western scholars.

## II

The vastness, variety, and richness of Sanskrit literature justify its greatness for all time to come. Referring to its vastness, Sir William Jones remarked, "Wherever we direct our attention to Hindu literature, the notion of infinity presents itself." The richness of Sanskrit literature can hardly be overestimated. No scholar can afford to pass by the inestimable materials which the *Upanishads*, the epics, the systems of philosophy, and theological treatises supply with their wealth of beauty, art, imagination, and inspiration. The memorable passage written by Max Müller regarding the richness of Sanskrit literature runs as follows: "If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions of some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant—I should point to India. And if I were to ask myself from what literature we, here in Europe, we who have been nurtured almost exclusively at the thoughts of

Greeks and Romans, and of one Semitic race, the Jewish, may draw that corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact more truly human, a life, not for this life only, but a transfigured and eternal life,—again I should point to India."

Apart from the humanizing influence, the study of Sanskrit affords a striking combination of art and religion in the poetical literature of the ancient Indians. That fine sentiments of unworldliness can combine the loftiest production of literary art can be profusely found in Sanskrit poetry—a fact which is very rarely found in the modern literatures of the world. Human love portrayed in the epics of India transcends the last vestige of worldliness and sensuous attachment which forms the constant theme of European poetry. In this connection we may quote Sir Monier-Williams: "It must be admitted, however, that in exhibiting pictures of domestic life and manners, the Sanskrit epics are even more true and real than the Greek and Roman. In the delineation of women the Hindu poet throws aside all exaggerated colouring and draws from nature—Kaikeyi, Kausalyâ, Mandodari (the favourite wife of Râvana), and even the humpbacked Mantharâ are all drawn to the very life. Sitâ, Draupadi, and Damayanti engage our affections and our interest far more than Helen or even Penelope. Indeed, Hindu wives are generally perfect patterns of conjugal fidelity; can it be doubted that in these delightful portraits of the *Pativrâtâ* or devoted wife, we have true representations of the purity and simplicity of Hindu domestic manners in early times?"

## III

Considering the fact that the study of

Sanskrit opens the eyes to wider horizons, broadens the mental outlook, and brings mankind in a sympathetic bond of understanding, human feelings and sentiments, the need for the revival of Sanskrit learning with greater zeal and labour can hardly be overestimated. It should be the duty of the Hindus above all to devise ways and means to propagate the study of Sanskrit in a more organized and systematic manner. It is a pity that even a large number of the leading Hindus who have received English education have themselves yet to know the extent of the great possibilities that Sanskrit education possesses for the national good of India and that of humanity as well. It may be a very unwelcome proposition in the face of the great appreciations made by the Western Orientalists, as cited above; but it is a truth which we can hardly conceal and which we should not. Many of our educated countrymen look upon Sanskrit learning as useless for all practical purposes in remaking India in the present-day world. Some of them think it to be a mere looking into the past achievements of the Hindus without having any benefit to themselves in the living present. This is the very question which was put to Swami Vivekananda during his return from the West for the first time. What he replied can be applied even today: "Many times have I been told that looking into the past only degenerates and leads to nothing, and that we should look to the future. That is true. But out of the past is built the future. Look back, therefore, as far as you can, drink deep of the eternal fountains that are behind, and after that, look forward, march forward and make India brighter, greater, much higher than she ever was. Our ancestors were great. We must first recall that. We must learn the elements of our being, the blood that

coarsens in our veins; we must have faith in that blood, and what it did in the past; and out of that faith, and consciousness of past greatness, we must build an India yet greater than she has been. There have been periods of decay and degradation. I do not attach much importance to them; we all know that. Such periods have been necessary. A mighty tree produces a beautiful ripe fruit. That fruit falls on the ground, it decays and rots, and out of that decay springs the root and the future tree, perhaps mightier than the first one. This period of decay through which we have passed was all the more necessary. Out of this decay is coming the India of the future; it is sprouting, its first leaves are already out, and a mighty gigantic tree, the *Urdhvacamulam* is here, already beginning to appear, and it is about that that I am going to speak to you."

#### IV

Sanskrit education has a great place in the social life of India. The so-called depressed classes can rise again and march shoulder to shoulder with the higher castes, provided they can learn Sanskrit and imbibe the cultural virtues of their common ancestors. The study of Sanskrit alone can, to a great extent, remove from Hindu society the baneful effects of caste inequalities, caste animosities on one hand, and exclusive claims, privileges, and social oppressions on the other. Swami Vivekananda pointing to the non-Brāhman castes said long ago: "Instead of wasting your energies in vain discussions and quarrels in the newspapers, instead of fighting and quarrelling in your own homes,—which is sinful,—use all your energies in acquiring the culture which the Brāhmana has, and the thing is done. Why do you not become Sanskrit scholars? Why do you not

spend millions to bring Sanskrit education to all the castes of India? That is the question. The moment you do these things, you are equal to the Brāhman. That is the secret of power in India. Sanskrit and prestige go together in India. As soon as you have that, none dares say anything against you. That is the secret; take that up."

It is now the duty of the higher castes to work for the amelioration of the wretched condition of their brethren. Those who deprived the so-called lower castes of learning the *Vedas* and other sacred books of ancient wisdom must now carry the treasures to the doors of the suppressed classes of Hindu society. The accumulated culture of ages must be thrown broadcast throughout the entire Hindu society. Instead of running thirsty for social philosophies to improve the condition of the masses of India in Western literature, let the people of India first seek it in the constantly flowing river of their own Sanskrit literature.

## V

In these days we often hear about the revival of Indian culture and its traditions. But unless the study of Sanskrit be made popular, there can hardly be any advancement in that direction. India and Sanskrit literature are organically related, so the revival of any aspect of Indian culture must have its inspiration from the literature. "India, though it has, as we have seen," observes Sir Monier-Williams in one of his books, "more than five hundred spoken dialects, has only one sacred language and only one sacred literature, accepted and revered by all adherents of Hinduism alike, however diverse in race, dialect, rank, and creed. That language is Sanskrit, and that literature is Sanskrit literature

—the only repository of the Veda or 'Knowledge' in its widest sense, the only vehicle of Hindu theology, philosophy, law, and mythology; the only mirror in which all creeds, opinions, customs, and usages of the Hindus are faithfully reflected; and (if we may be allowed to use a fourth metaphor) the only quarry whence the requisite materials may be obtained for improving the vernaculars, or for expressing important religious and scientific ideas."

Those who think that the Hindus are a dying race should all the more pay heed to the revival of Sanskrit learning. Besides, the Hindus who are said to be the oldest race in the world in the sense that they built up its earliest civilization, now form a population exceeding 250 millions and can very well claim to be a race that is not dying at least numerically. Considering the numerical strength, the Hindus can stand as a nation by themselves and need to revive their ancient learning not only to save their own country and culture but also to preach a gospel of equality and freedom to all the races and nations in the present distracted world of ours. In the last Hindu Youth Conference held in Lahore, Dr. Radhakumud Mookerjee observes in his Presidential Address: "You must never forget that it is the Hindus who have built up India through the ages since the dawn of civilization and have won for themselves a place under the sun in India with a single-minded devotion and patriotism which refused to cultivate any extra-Indian affiliations or distractions. There has been no doubt in earlier times an expansion of Hindu India, a sort of a greater India, beyond the boundaries of India proper. But this expansion was only an expansion of ideals, an empire of thought, and not of territory or political control."

This is a statement which should dispel the darkness of doubt or suspicion in the minds of those who smell of any communal bias in the efforts of the Hindus for popularizing the study of Sanskrit and thereby creating a humanizing force in the modern world. The *Upanishads*, the *Gîtâ*, and other treasures of Sanskrit literature preach in unequivocal terms an all-tolerant, an all-comprehensive, and an all-absorbing message to all sects, creeds, races, and nationalities; hence the cultural revival of the Hindus is no source of danger to other cultures and to the traditions of the races of small minorities in India. The cultural history of India can justify such a unique claim of the Hindus and it can be best expressed in the words of a great Indologist like the late lamented Dr. Sylvain Levi :

"The multiplicity of the manifestations of the Indian genius as well as their fundamental unity gives India the right to figure on the first rank in the history of civilized nations. Her civilization, spontaneous and original, unrolls itself in a continuous time across at least thirty centuries, without interruption, without deviation. Ceaselessly in contact with foreign elements which threatened to strangle her, she persevered victoriously in absorbing them, assimilating them and enriching herself with them. Thus she has seen the Greeks, the Scythians, the Afghans, the Mongols to pass before her eyes in succession and is regarding with indifference the Englishmen—confident to pursue under the accident of the surface the normal course of her high destiny."

## TALKS OF SWAMI BRAHMANANDA

AT THE ALAMBAZAR MATH  
1ST JUNE, 1897

**Question:** Maharaj! Tell us something about Master. How did he use to look upon all?

**Answer:** He used to look upon all as God. One day Swamiji asked him, "You love us so much, will you finally turn out to be a second Jada Bharata?" He replied: "One turns out to be a Jada Bharata by musing on inert objects but I dwell on Consciousness! The day I shall feel attached to you, I shall drive you all away."

One day Master did not speak to Swamiji for some reason. On finding the latter putting up with it without any difference and without a cheerless countenance he remarked, "He is a great vessel." Again another day as Keshab Sen showered praises on

Swamiji he said, "Do not praise him so much; he has yet to blossom out."

"What one's love for God should be like?" he used to say: "One should be restless even like a dog with an ulcer in the head, which runs about here and there mad with pain."

Master never allowed anybody to stay with him for more than two or three days. Some felt annoyed at a youth's staying long with him and complained that he taught renunciation. To that he replied: "Let him take up a worldly life. Am I dissuading him from it? But let him have knowledge first and then enter the world. Do I preach the renunciation of lust and wealth to everybody? I preach to them alone who need only a little stoking up." He used to say to the rest, "Go and enjoy the hog-plum pickle; come here for medicine when you have colic."

"Can you account for this idiosyncrasy of mine?" Master often used to ask all: "What makes me go to them so often, who cannot buy me a pice worth of puffed sugar cakes, and who have not means even to offer a torn mat to sit upon?" He himself used to explain afterwards: "I find that they will be easily successful, it is very difficult for the rest—the latter are, as it were, pots for curd. One cannot keep milk in them." He used to say to them, "I pray for you so that you can realize God quickly."

One day when the topic of the Kartâ-bhajâs came up in the course of conversation, Girish Babu sarcastically remarked that he would write a drama about them. On hearing Girish Babu talk in that vein, Master looked grave and said, "You see, there have been many persons of realization even among them. This too is a path."

Talking about Master, Maharaj said that Master used to forbid them to take food at Srâddha ceremonies, marriage celebrations and other like occasions observed by householders. He would also ask us to take the name of Hari (Lord) before sitting for meditation.

One day Swami Turiyananda asked Master how lust could be got rid of. "Why should it be got rid of?" he replied, "Turn it to another direction." He said the same thing about anger, greed, infatuation, and other things. He felt very much lifted up in spirits on hearing it.

He used to say: "He reveals Himself more where there is great eagerness."

He used to say to some, "Have love for this (pointing to himself), that will do." Oh, the wonderful things that have happened!

## MORAL PROBLEMS OF THE PRESENT AGE

BY VICTOR LOGA

### THE PROBLEM OF AN OBJECTIVE MORAL STANDARD ARISING ESPECIALLY AT THE IMPORTANT MOMENTS IN OUR LIFE

Can we set up an objective moral standard?

This question can be put in our everyday life.

It arose to my mind in its gravest significance thrice during my life of adventures and experiences.

The first time was in Russia in the darkest years of the War and revolution 1914-1920.

I witnessed the innumerable scenes of human misery, of famine, epidemic, of the ravages of fire and sword. . .

I witnessed the innumerable atrocities, slaughter of men and women,

and common crimes committed in the name of liberty upon a deluded people.

Ten years passed by. . .

From the plains of the mighty river Volga, from the icy waters of lake Baikal in Siberia I stood in September, 1930 in the wonderful Richelieu Hall of the Sorbone, in Paris, among the other 250 delegates of 32 nationalities assembled at the International Moral Education Congress for discussing this same problem of the objective moral standard.

And then, thirdly, this question advanced by the Scandinavian moralists, must be, if not resolved, at least meditated upon, by every conscious human being in this year of 1936, when

a people of undeniably great civilization annexes, by war, the territory of another free people, in the name of the "necessity of its own expansion," in spite of all moral standards of Christianity, and the solemn Pacts of the League of Nations.

We will not discuss here the moral problems of wars and revolutions; such historical events cannot be isolated and examined as separate links of the chain of human activity and tragedy.

#### THE INTERNATIONAL MORAL EDUCATION CONGRESS IN PARIS, 1930

But an assembly such as the International Moral Education Congress was a separate and distinct fact in itself, and it is interesting to remember that there were gathered together moralists, philosophers, and pedagogues from the whole world, who stood helpless before the question of an objective moral standard.

The world's greatest brains searched vainly for a foundation on which to raise the edifice of scientific moral education.

The rôle of history and sociology in moral education was discussed.

It was said, not without malice, that morality has need, perhaps, of historical experience, but that history lives very easily without morality. And those last 6 years of the League's activity proved it throughout.

Sociology as a comparatively new branch of human knowledge is itself in need of a scientific base for sanction.

Some timid voices suggested religion as the base of the moral education.

But this point of view, being subjective, did not find "the good atmosphere". It led, moreover, to another question: which of the many religions can serve for this purpose the whole of Humanity?

The Congress discussed discipline and

autonomy in education, and finished by adopting the "motto" proposed by the venerable English pedagogue, Mr. Gould:

"There is but one child."

That means, the love for the child is universal in all peoples, without difference of race and creed.

It should bring us, in consequence, to the constructive ideal of one goal in education—the evolution of the dormant potential energies and spiritual capacities of the human being, approached by various ways, in relation to the geographical, social and economic situation in which it is to develop.

The problem of an objective base for moral development has not, therefore, been solved by strictly scientific methods, outside of man.

The Congress had to acknowledge the value of a common feeling abiding in each human heart.

In the universal love of the child we presume a better form of life in time to come, a future brotherhood of men, a mutual comprehension and solidarity of peoples.

That must be the adamant stone of the whole building of human solidarity.

Similarly, we conceive the ideal of an objective moral standard of life.

Does it exist? On what can it be based?

Greatest truths are at the same time the simplest.

It is not necessary to use dialectical tricks to discover them.

Humanity has acknowledged them during the ages, from the dawn of history. They lie implicit in our consciousness, they abide in our Soul as the very core of its existence.

Thousands of years ago, it was discovered by our ancestors and about 40 years ago it was wonderfully expressed by one of the greatest synthetic brains

of Humanity, the Hindu philosopher and moralist Swami Vivekananda.<sup>1</sup>

"The rational West is earnestly bent upon seeking out the 'raison d'être' of its philosophy and its ethics.

And you know well that ethics cannot be derived from the mere sanction of any personage, however great and divine he may have been, of one who having been born but yesterday has had to die a short time after.

Such an explanation of the authority of ethics no more appeals to the highest of the world's thinkers.

They want something more than human sanction for ethical and moral codes to be binding, they want *some eternal principle* of truth as the sanction of ethics!

And where is that eternal sanction to be found except in the only reality that exists, in you, in me, in all, in the "Self", in the Soul?

*The infinite oneness of the Soul is the eternal sanction of all morality."*

#### THE SANCTION OF ALL MORALITY

This oneness is the "rationale" of all ethics and all spirituality: Europe wants it today just as much as the down-trodden masses of the East.

The moral standard can be based on the belief in ourselves, in the human Soul.

"Believe first in yourselves and then believe in anything else."

Is it objectively true? Is it only, perhaps, a subjective reasoning or a mystic dream?

We have to analyse the word "objective".

#### OBJECTIVE KNOWLEDGE

Science is "objective" if based upon measure. The physical phenomena can

be measured by grammes, centimetres and seconds and expressed in these units.

But as it is proved by the Theory of Relativity these units are not independent, unchangeable.

The only "objective" witness is there in our human Soul.

But you perceive the world's phenomena in one way, and I see them otherwise. We come, then, to antinomies or chaotic opinions and all understanding not only in moral but also in scientific matters becomes impossible.

Nevertheless, we are progressing in something which we call "science," "humanitarianism" and so on.

"Objective," then, we will call all knowledge, all experience which can be lived, proved, repeated anywhere, at any time, by anyone.

The love for the child cannot be measured; nevertheless all peoples, in all countries, at any time, believe or simply are aware of it.

This universal feeling, then, exists; its existence is an "objective" one.

#### THE HUMAN SOUL, ITS ETERNAL NATURE

Does the human Soul exist?

We develop continuously, from childhood to the latest days of our life. Our body changes, our brain changes, our mind changes too, but something remains *as witness* of that, is always the same, immutable, like the banks of a river relative to the running waters.

That "something" we call "Soul," "ego," the eternal "I" or "Self".

Life in the ordinary sense of activity is but the series of experiences of the "Ego".

Bad or good, agreeable or not, they serve us as stimuli for our Self-knowledge, which is the only goal of our evolution.

Individuals stand in different degrees of development. Nowadays, as adults,

<sup>1</sup> See *Indian Lectures* by Swami Vivekananda.

we have more experience than in our childhood.

One individual has more than another, because he has been born in other circumstances than his fellow.

Hence, we see everywhere the objective inequality of bodies, brains, temperaments and . . . ethics.

#### HIERARCHY AND AUTHORITY

Thence is derived also the hierarchy of men, a differentiation which means only different degrees of experience.

For cannibals it would be progress to become meat-eaters. In future, we shall all, perhaps, be vegetarians.

Yet, in spite of this variety of individuals, the belief in the unity, in the inner brotherhood of men is innate—inherent.

If our Self is unchangeable—it is eternal. If it be eternal—it is omnipresent, omniscient, and it can be *only One*, expressing and manifesting Itself in various ways, in various forms, in various bodies.

My brother can be older than myself. He has more experience. I believe in what he tells me.

But I tell myself that all is true that I can examine and verify, at any time.

Thus authority appears.

The authority of Columbus and of millions of other sailors enables me to believe in the existence of America, without having seen it or visited it.

The authority of Newton, Galileo, Kepler, Copernicus enables us to believe in many mathematical or astronomical facts.

As H. Poincaré said<sup>2</sup> the scientific progress of humanity could not be conceived unless we believe in the authority of certain enlightened men, as we believe in ourselves.

We come then in such a way, to universal laws and universal knowledge.

<sup>2</sup> *La valeur de la science* by H. Poincaré.

The same must be true in moral questions. Man has realized that the misery of his fellows makes him, at once or later on, unhappy too, and he expresses that in the law of neighbourly love.

His subjective experience becomes universal, and therefore objective.

The Russian revolution might appear not to have concerned other peoples. But is not the misery of this unhappy nation, isolated from the rest of Humanity, the source of even material disturbances for Europe?

#### THE SOLIDARITY OF ALL MEN

Almost all religions, all moral sciences, all international laws, ethics and pacts are based upon the fact of the interdependence of all men.

The earthquake in Japan, the famine in China or India must have, later on, their repercussion, even though it be invisible, in Europe. Their sufferings must be ours.

From the solidarity of mankind one step farther leads us to the community and inter-relationship of all beings, as it was preached 24 centuries ago by the Enlightened One.

The commandment of Jesus to love our neighbour, this transcendental oneness of all of Gautama Buddha and Sankarâchârya, or the organic relation of all physical phenomena found by scientists like W. Ostwald, R. Mach, H. Poincaré and A. Einstein, this unity of matter and energy emphasized by workers from Lavoisier and Robert Mayer to Curie-Sklodowska—all that unity in plurality is the base of our modern knowledge, nay, it must be the base of our moral knowledge of the new era.

No doubt, the political facts seem to contest this truth. Revolutions, competition, the struggle for life, wars of the past or of to-morrow may shake



our belief in solidarity but only superficially.

#### CIVILIZATION AND CULTURE. DIFFERENCES IN CULTURE AND THE RELATIVITY OF MORAL STANDARDS

As among individuals, nations are also in different degrees of moral development.

It must be remembered, too, that civilization and culture are different things.

A nation can be civilized, having all the marks of a very high material, intellectual or artistic culture, but be, permanently or temporarily, on a low level of morality.

Hence, the relativity of moral standards in modern societies derives from the difference of moral culture, which changes according to the religious, national and other ideas of the epoch.

Polygamy is immoral in the West. In the East it can be moral.

To kill is sin. During war it is "a patriotic action".

Stealing is punished everywhere. Committed by "the state" it is called only "contribution," "expropriation," "devaluation" and so on.

As long as we are progressing at different speeds, as individuals or nations, so long will we have different personal or national experiences and religious ideals: moral standards will change, too, and mutual comprehension in moral affairs will be very difficult.

Nevertheless, the time seems to have come for us to seek in this chaotic state of creeds, morality, political and social conduct for one universal criterion of morality, unless we would see our civilization crumbling.

It is absolutely true that "the latest craze for utilitarian morality has developed into a relativity which is accused of leading to a general moral nihilism."

On the contrary, it is untrue that "bolshivism" or materialistic communism are the only causes and reasons for this state of affairs.

They are rather the consequence of the lack of positive ideals. They can live only as parasites of amoral societies, like worms on rotten trees.

Let them have light and air, give them the sound food of humanity, and all these moral diseases will disappear, will fall from the human tree.

That must inevitably come, because everywhere there is apparent a craving for universal moral rules.

Universal morality will come with the spreading of a universal religion reconciled with science.<sup>3</sup> Universal religion does not contradict any existing creeds. It is only the fulfilment of all and the reconciliation of all.

<sup>3</sup> See *La vie de Ramakrishna, la vie de Vivekananda* par Romain Rolland. Paris.

Universal religion exists, too, as long as mankind has done.

It has not been revealed only by some one historical person but is the result of the spiritual and moral experience of all pioneers, guides and sages of Humanity, known to us by name or absolutely unknown.

Universal religion does not contradict reason. It can be called "the absolute knowledge".

Sri Ramakrishna, the latest Hindu religious mystic, realized practically the inner unity of all religions and expressed the truth of the universal religion:

"There is but one God but endless are His names."

"Diverse are the ways and means to approach God."

"Every religion in the world is one of the ways to reach Him."

Swami Vivekananda says:

"Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal.

Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy, by one or more, or all of them, and be free.

This is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or ritual, or books, or temples, or forms are but secondary details. Teach yourselves, teach everyone his real nature. Power will come, glory will come, goodness will come, purity will come."

Science and religion, reason and feeling become one in the universal religion which teaches the divinity of the human Soul.

Man has to choose one of the two alternatives. When he looks upon himself as one of the innumerable creatures of nature, as a phenomenon, all his actions will appear to be governed by the law of necessity.

Societies will be governed, too, by the struggle for life, and the only morality will be the morality of force and cunning.

When he feels he is not a slave of nature, and can take the responsibility for his own development because of his inherent consciousness of freedom, he looks upon himself as a moral and spiritual being, and his consciousness of eternity makes him bound with his fellows, society and Humanity, where he finds his natural extension.

THE IDEAL OF AN OBJECTIVE MORAL STANDARD IS IN EXISTENCE AND NEEDS ONLY TO BE REALIZED

We come, then, to the definitive answer to the definitive question:

Can an objective moral standard be set up in the present age? If so, on what can it be based?

And we reply:

—Yes, as an ideal. . .

Among the varieties of moral codes and moral standards due to the diversity of creeds, religions and moral cultures, some unity appears as well.

It exists already, as it has been explained above. It needs only to be remembered and realized.

The most advanced ideas of the divinity of the Soul, the inter-dependence of all, or the Oneness of all, preached by all sages of all ages and races, can serve as the base for moral rules of lasting value, giving liberty to

accommodate the changeable forms to permanent, eternal principles.

The universal Truth of the integrity and liberty of the Soul, the possibility of its eternal development as the "conditio sine qua non" of all morality is the prize of all Humanity.

Nobody can say: "This divine man has solved the "question." He is the only saviour of Mankind."

From this derived national gods which became idols, and thus there came about the separability and sects.

The Indian Upanishads are the oldest scriptures containing the ideas of "Oneness."

But we might mention many names of prophets, sages, moralists of all races of old, as well as the names of philosophers and moralists of later centuries and ages in the West and East: Kant, Schopenhauer, J. J. Rousseau, Swedenborg, Nietzsche, Tolstoi, Hæne-Wronski, Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore and many other giants of Humanity.

Universal Truth is eternal and must live in the living guides of Mankind.

The ideal of an objective morality already exists. That is love, sympathy, and kindness to all that lives, based upon the religious, philosophical and scientific Oneness of all.

It is not necessary to emphasize that this formula contains the love of neighbours too.

But it goes deeper.

Can you imagine a good and moral man loving his fellow but torturing animals?

Can you imagine a good and moral man not fond of plants, flowers, forests, mountains and seas?

The ideal of a moral, noble man or woman implies a loving being, sympathetic, kind to all creatures, seeking for and creating or trying to create anywhere, and in any circumstances, peace and harmony. . .

The standard for an objective morality can be set up in its general outlines as follows:

Each thought, desire, action or line of conduct that brings us co-operation, friendship, tolerance and leads to Harmony and Oneness—is moral.

It means love and evolution.

Each thought, desire, action and line of conduct leading to discrimination, separativeness, selfishness, hatred, competition, exclusiveness—is immoral from the universal moral point of view.

It means Disharmony and Chaos.

We live, indeed in a most important era of great changes. It is plain that the old-established values seem to be crumbling.

What are we preparing instead?

Teach the masses the integrity of the individual in the sense of the Soul and not only as body and brain.

Teach Humanity as an organic whole!

The individuals are cells, the peoples are organs. All have some function to be executed.

But mark it, *the cell is the base of all organisation*. That is what must be repeatedly cried to the doctrinaires of today, whose experiments with society-building are accompanied by tyranny over the individual.

Mankind is on the march. The way is long. Not all can yet see the spiritual oneness and the necessity of co-operation instead of jealousy, competition, hatred and war.

Let men and women have more experience if they do not believe in authority. They will come from the subjective belief to the universal, objective truth.

All pioneers of Humanity, Hindu rishis or seers, Christian mystics, Mahomedan sufis, great thinkers of all nations and times have realized the Unity in Diversity, and as has been proved by the latest Hindu prophet,

Sri Ramakrishna, this realization is to be attained by all, in all religions, if we are only sincere, pure in heart and unselfish.

The truth of this Oneness and Unity cannot be taught by dialectics.

The sages taught saying: we have realized Unity, and you can too.

The “*summum bonum*” of all moralists of all ages is based upon the truth of the inter-dependence of all, the relationship of all phenomena, as well on the material as on the spiritual plane.

And neighbourly love and universal love derive therefrom.

It is to be remarked that not only the prophets or thinkers were aware of this.

In some degree many poets and musicians have had visions and anticipated in their works the new form of existence, the harmony of the Universe.

Beethoven and Wagner were of these.

The hierarchy is the core of progressive humanity and does not contradict the ideal of equality and fraternity in spirit, as the love of the family does not deny the liberty of the individual.

The universal solidarity must draw its force up from the unique divine source of the integral, immortal value of the human Soul.

No morality can be based on material collectivism. The materialistic theories and communism denying the spiritual source of life make men brutes, turning back the cheated people to the animal necessities of life, instead of bringing the promised heaven on earth.

#### VIVEKANANDA'S TEACHINGS ON THE OBJECTIVE STANDARD OF MORALITY

Vivekananda, the above-mentioned Hindu moralist and philosopher, in his inspired teachings in India, America

and Europe, said of the base of morality:

"Advaita, the philosophy of Oneness of all or the spiritual monism alone gives the sanction for morality.

All religions preach that the essence of morality is to be good unto others, and to be unselfish.

But why? . . .

Because some scriptures have so enjoined it? Let them, that is nothing to me.

Each one for himself and . . . somebody take the hindermost, that is all morality in the world, at least with many.

What is the reason why I should be moral? You cannot explain it except when you come to know the principle laid down in the 'Bhagavat Gītā.

'He who sees everyone is himself, and himself in everyone, thus seeing the same God living equally in all, the sage, for such is he, no more kills the Self by the Self'. Know through Advaita that if you hurt anyone you hurt yourself.

Herein is the basis of all morality. The others teach it, but cannot give you reason.

And what will you gain for knowing this Unity? Strength and illumination. Know that all sins and all evils can be summed up into that one word:—weakness.

It is weakness that makes men do that they ought not to do. Send not out thoughts and words of weakness unto yourselves or to humanity.

Let them all know that they are spirit.

Let them suck it with their mother's milk—the idea of Strength of Spirit. And then let them think of it, and out of that thought will proceed works such as the world has never seen.

You shall have to believe that you are immortal spirit, if you want to be

great in the material plane also.

I may be a little bubble, and you a mountain-high wave, but we must know that for both of us the infinite ocean is the background, the infinite God our magazine of power and strength, and we can draw as much as we like, both of us, from that reservoir behind.

Believe therefore in yourselves.

Believe in yourselves first, and then believe in anything else.

In the history of the world, you will find that only those nations that have believed in themselves have become great and strong.

In the history of each nation, we will always find that individuals that have believed in themselves have become great and strong."

Thus the ideal of an objective moral standard exists.

THE IDEAL OF A MORAL STANDARD MUST BE REALIZED BY INDIVIDUAL EFFORTS.

THE MASSES MUST KNOW THE  
POSSIBILITY OF THIS

It cannot be explained, only stated in general terms: morality derives from the inter-dependence and mutual inner-relationship of all beings.

Love, solidarity, sympathy are the only expression and manifestation of this Truth.

Nobody can learn the Truth of the Oneness of all by the ordinary ways of reasoning or dialectics even with the help of a teacher—philosopher or moralist.

THE NECESSITY OF INTROSPECTION

Only individual spiritual researches, meditations, contemplations: it may be called prayer or psychological introspection would bring us to the super-consciousness called intuition, enlightenment or cosmic consciousness.

Meditation on the inner value of the Soul and on the solidarity of all beings

is the base of universal moral training.

How is it possible in the midst of our daily occupation?

Certainly, the West suffers from excessive external activity.

We have no time for introspection and spirituality. Disturbed by perpetual movement and educated in the teachings of the French philosopher Descartes: *Cogito—ergo sum*, I think, therefore I am—which leads at last to the false conclusion that thought is all, the West has lost the key to true knowledge. Very rarely do the thinkers of Europe, like the philosopher Bergson, express anything about intuition above the intellect.

Nowadays, Europe and America are only beginning to understand the value of calmness, meditation and prayer.

We have recognized that for the formation of regular crystals we must keep the solution containing them potentially in an undisturbed state, but seldom do we realize that to be calm, quiet and serene are necessary to the crystallization and the development of our Soul.

Look at our educational methods.

It is nothing but movement, eternal haste, from early morning to late at night.

Every minute of the day is intended for some activity or other. This speed kills us.

It is necessary to develop our moral forces, lest we should create a new barbarism—the barbarism of mechanical organization.

It is necessary for Western peoples to learn the contemplative methods of the East. And the East has to learn from them their power of organization.

I would like to cry to my Western brothers: stop, enough of this satanic movement, this feverish activity, let us learn the power of meditation, and then should find in the depths of our

Soul the remedy for our economic crisis as well as for our moral diseases.

Let us learn that all the various ways of worshipping God must not prevent us from seeing and feeling unity always and everywhere.

Let us understand and spread over the whole world for its regeneration these sacred Sanscrit words expressive of synthetic knowledge:

“*Ekam sat viprah bahudhā vadanti.*”

“What exists is one: the sages call that by various names.”

#### THE ACTUAL MORAL REVOLUTION

I have mentioned so often the sayings of the greatest authorities of all ages and all races, and I end with the prophetic words of that sage who realized in himself the synthetic knowledge of the East and the West:<sup>4</sup>

“—We are entering into a new Great Cycle of the race, and the old is being prepared for being dropped off like an old worn-out husk.

Old conventions, ideals, customs, laws, ethics, and things sociological, economical, theological, philosophical, and metaphysical have been outgrown, and are about to be shed by the race.

The great cauldron of human thought is bubbling away fiercely, and many things are rising to its surface.

—Like all great changes, the good will come only with much pain—all birth is with pain.

The race feels the pain and perpetual unrest, but knows not what is the disease nor the remedy.

Many false cases of diagnosis and prescription are even now noticeable, and will become still more in evidence as the years roll by.

Many self-styled saviours of the race, prescribers for the pain of the soul and mind, will arise and fall.

<sup>4</sup> Swami Vivekananda 1863-1902.

But out of it all will come that for which the race now waits.

The change will come from the unfolding of the race-mind, the process being now under way.

Are not the signs of mental unrest and discomfort becoming more and more apparent as the days go by?

The pain is growing greater, and the race is beginning to fret and chafe and moan.

It knows not what it wants, but it knows that it feels pain and wants something to relieve that pain.

The old things are beginning to totter and ideas rendered sacred by years of observance are being brushed aside with a startling display of irreverence.

Under the surface of our civilization we may hear the straining and groaning of the ideas and principles that are striving to force their way out on the plane of manifestation.

Men are running hither and thither crying for a *leader* and saviour. They cry for satisfaction, but it eludes them. And yet all this search and disappointment is part of the Great Change, and

is preparing the race for That-which-must-come.

And yet the relief will not come from any Thing.

It will come from Within.

The world is tiring of hypocrisy and dishonesty in all human relations, and is crying aloud to be led back, some-way to Truth and Honesty in Thought and Action.

But it does not see the way out.

From the deep recesses of the race-mind are rising to the surface old passions, relics from the cave-dweller days, and all sorts of ugly mental relics of the past.

And they will continue to rise and show themselves until at last the bubbling pot will begin to quiet down, and then will come a New Peace, and the best will come to the surface—the essence of all the experience of the race. . .

During the struggle ahead of the race play well your part, doing the best you can, living each day by itself, meeting each new phase of life with confidence and courage."

## SANKARA'S INTERPRETATION OF THE VEDĀNTA-SŪTRAS

BY SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA

There is a strong opinion current amongst scholars today that whatever be the merit of Sankara's metaphysical doctrines considered by themselves or even as doctrines elucidating the teachings of the *Upanishads*, he is not faithful to Bādarāyana in his interpretation of the Sūtras. They hold that Bādarāyana was ignorant of a twofold Brahman and consequently of a twofold knowledge; that he was not aware of the doctrine of *Māyā* and so did not hold

that the world was unreal, but that Brahman underwent a real change into this world-order; and that the Sūtras do not hold the view of absolute identity of the individual soul and Brahman. In short their view is that the system of Bādarāyana is a theistic system which has more affinities with the systems of Rāmānuja and Nimbārka than with Sankara's pure Monism. This view is nothing new. Bhāskara at the beginning of his commentary on the Sūtras

accuses Sankara of this very thing. But at the same time we can also cite Sândilya, the author of the Bhakti-Sutras, who refers to Bâdarâyana as a Monist in Sutra 30 of his work which shows that the view that Bâdarâyana was an Abhedavâdin was prevalent in ancient days.

It is not possible to deal with such a controversial subject in a short article like this. All the same we shall take some salient points connected with this discussion and try to see how far such a criticism against Sankara is justified. At the outset, however, it is fair to admit that at places Sankara's interpretations seem to be far-fetched; but this is by no means a defect of his Bhâshya alone but of all the other extant Bhâshyas as well. Moreover, in such a critical study we shall not gain much if we follow the letter of the Sutras, missing the general spirit of the work as a whole. It is possible to give a consistent interpretation of the Sutras by following the letter of the Sutras and at the same time miss the general spirit of the work as a whole.

पौर्वापर्यापरामृष्टः शब्दोऽन्याम् कुल्ले मतिम् ।

"The Sruti texts give rise to a wrong view if they are not studied as one connected whole"--in other words, the letter often kills the spirit.

To start with, let us take the definition of Brahman given by Bâdarâyana in Sutra 2. Sutra 1 says that Brahman is to be inquired into, for the knowledge of It leads to Moksha (Liberation). The next Sutra defines Brahman and so naturally we have to understand that the Brahman, the knowledge of which gives Moksha is defined here. As such we get a Saguna Brahman as the subject matter of the Sâstra, and not the Nirguna Brahman of Sankara which is Existence. Knowledge, Bliss Absolute.

So it appears that the author at the very beginning of the work precludes any chance of Sankara's doctrine being read in his Sutras. But let us investigate into the matter a little and see whether it is actually so.

After the statement in Sutra 1 that Brahman is to be known, naturally the question about the nature of Brahman arises. The Sutrakâra (aphorist) here anticipates an objection that Brahman cannot be defined at all. For whatever we cognize in this world is limited and as such cannot be a characteristic of Brahman which is infinite. A limited thing cannot define an unlimited thing. Nor can any characteristic which is absolutely beyond our experience, like Reality etc., define Brahman, for it is only a well-known characteristic that defines a thing and distinguishes it from other things. Again the scriptures cannot define Brahman, for being absolutely unique It cannot be expressed in speech. Thus in the absence of any definition Brahman cannot be a thing worth inquiring into and cannot serve any human purpose. To refute all such objections the Sutrakâra defines Brahman in Sutra 2. Granted that the world we experience cannot define Brahman as being a quality of It or as being identical with It, yet the quality of being the (supposed) cause of the world may indicate It. "Birth etc." mentioned in the Sutra define Brahman *per accidens*. Though they inhere in the world and not pertain to Brahman, the causality connected therewith pertains to Brahman, and therefore the definition holds good. This causality indicates Brahman even as the snake indicates the rope when we say that which is the snake is the rope, where the rope is indicated by the snake owing to the illusory connection between the two. This definition, therefore, actually aims at the Nirguna Brahman

and cannot be taken as a definition of the Saguna Brahman.<sup>2</sup>

Again the Sūtra refers to the Taittiriya text, "That from which these beings are born," etc. and the word 'that' here refers to the Brahman defined as Existence, Knowledge, and Infinite in the immediately preceding section, the Ānanda Valli. Therefore from this text itself we get at the real nature of Brahman.

Yet it may be questioned why the author should give an indirect definition of Brahman instead of defining It in Its real nature as, "Existence, Knowledge, Bliss is Brahman." The answer is that the author has followed here the universally accepted principle of taking a student step by step from a lower to a higher truth, from a grosser to a subtler one. It is indeed by first pointing to the end of the branch of a tree that one points out the moon to the child. Similarly, first Brahman as the Cause is distinguished from this world of products, and finally by saying that from Bliss this universe is born, It is differentiated from other probable causes like atoms, the Pradhāna, etc. In this way finally Brahman's real nature as distinguished from everything else is described. The aspirant whose mind is turned away from the world of the senses first comprehends Brahman as the cause of the world. Though in Itself as the Inner Self Brahman is immediate, yet we have the idea that It is remote. Hence the Śruti first teaches that Brahman is the cause of the world, and then to remove this false notion of remoteness it teaches that It is one with the Inner Self. So long as this identity is not realized, It appears to be the cause of the world.

Moreover, Bliss which admits of no

difference is Brahman. In the *Chhândogya Upanishad* we have, "The Bhūman (Infinite) only is Bliss. This Infinite we must desire to understand" (7.23.1). What is this Infinite which is called Bliss? The Upanishad explains: "Where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, understands nothing else, that is the Infinite. Where one sees something else, hears something else understands something else, that is the finite. The Infinite is immortal, the finite is mortal" (*Ibid.* 7. 24. 1). This non-dual Bliss is the Infinite, the Brahman defined in the Ānanda Valli as "Existence, Knowledge, Infinite is Brahman", and from this all creation springs—so understood Bhrigu, the son of Varuna.

Again the *Taittiriya* text, "That from which all beings are born . . . Try to know that. That is Brahman," aims at defining a non-dual Brahman as the only reality and does not define a Saguna Brahman: It defines Brahman as the efficient and also as the material cause of the universe, since It is the place of dissolution of the world. Being the material cause of everything, It is the basic reality behind everything and this gives rise to the intuition that Brahman is non-dual and that everything else is unreal. Its being the efficient cause also establishes the fact that It is non-dual, as it precludes anything else being such an efficient cause. Thus this definition, which is but one, qualifies *per accidens* the non-dual Brahman as both the efficient and material cause of the universe. This material causality of Brahman which is non-dual, immutable intelligence cannot be one of origination, as by primeval atoms by whose combination something new is created; nor can it be one of modification as of the Pradhāna of the Sāṅkhyas. It is through Vivarta or apparent modification, through Mâyâ or nescience that

<sup>2</sup> *Bhāmati* and *Ratnaprabhā* on Sankara's comments on Sūtra 2.



Brahman is transformed into this universe. This universe is therefore illusory. That this is in accordance with Bâdarâyana's view is made clear by the fact that he uses the word 'Sat' as a characteristic epithet to denote Brahman, which he would not have done if he had considered the Jivas and the world also real like Brahman. *Vide* Sutra 2.3.9. The word 'Sat' here is interpreted by all commentators to denote Brahman.

Thus we find that this definition is given by Bâdarâyana to indicate a Nirvisesha (absolute) Brahman and not a Saguna Brahman and he has selected a significant text from the wide range of scriptural texts for defining his Brahman.

Now let us take up the Sutras in Chapter III, Section 2 where Bâdarâyana describes the nature of Brahman. Sutras 11-20 according to Sankara deal with the reconciliation of texts which describe Brahman both as attributeless and as possessing attributes and mean that even from difference of place a twofold characteristic cannot be predicted of Brahman, because the scriptures teach throughout that Brahman is without attributes (11). If it be said that such difference is taught by the scriptures we deny it, because with respect to each form the Sruti declares just the opposite of that. The Sruti explains at every instance that the form is not true and that behind all Upâdhis there is one formless principle (*vide* Brih. 2. 5. 1) (12). Moreover, some teach thus (*vide* Katha 4.11) (13). Verily Brahman is formless, for that is the purport of the texts (14). And as formless light takes form, so does Brahman take form in connection with Upâdhis which serve the purpose of Upâsanâ (meditation) (15). It is Pure Intelligence (16). The Sruti and Smriti teach that It is attributeless (17). Therefore we have with respect

to Brahman comparisons like the images of the sun. The forms are mere reflections, they are not real (18).

Râmânuja and Nimbârka on the other hand see quite a different subject discussed in these Sutras. The topic is not whether Brahman is attributeless or possesses attributes, but whether It is polluted by imperfections owing to Its being inside everything as the Inner Ruler, even as the soul being embodied is subject to imperfections due to its states of waking, dream, and dreamless sleep described in Sutras 1-10. Therefore according to Râmânuja the Sutras mean that even on account of place such as matter and soul there is not the possibility of the Supreme Lord being contaminated by imperfections, since everywhere in the scriptures Brahman is described as having a twofold characteristic, viz. freedom from imperfections and possessing all blessed qualities (11). If it be said that since the soul also by nature possesses according to Chh. 8. 7. the twofold characteristic of Brahman and yet is subject to imperfections due to its connection with a body, the Inner Ruler will likewise be subject to such conditions owing to its connection with bodies, we deny it, for the Sruti at every place denies it by saying that Brahman is immortal and therefore free from imperfections (*vide* Brih. 5. 7. 3 and 22). The imperfections in the soul are due to Karma and the Lord who is not subject to it is therefore free from such imperfections (13). Brahman can be said to have no form, as It is the originator of name and form and therefore is not subject to Karma like the souls which being embodied are subject to it (14). To an objection that the differentiated form of Brahman is false, Sutra 15 answers thus: Even as on account of texts like, "Brahman is Existence, Knowledge, Infinite" we have to accept that intelligence constitutes the essential

nature of Brahman, so also we have to admit that It possesses a twofold characteristic, as otherwise such texts become meaningless (15). And the texts say that much only, i.e. that Brahman has intelligence for its essential nature, and does not negate the other attributes of Brahman (16). The Sruti and Smṛiti state thus (17). For this very reason are comparisons such as reflected images of the sun. Brahman although abiding in manifold places, ever possesses the twofold characteristic and is not contaminated even as the sun reflected in dirty water is not polluted (18).

Nimbārka also more or less follows Rāmānuja's interpretation as regards Sūtras 11-14. Sūtras 15 and 16 he interprets in a different way, and sees in them an argument for establishing the authority of the Sruti as absolute in the matter discussed in 11-14. Sūtras 17-21 he interprets like Rāmānuja, though he reads 21 as a separate Sūtra and not as a part of 20 as Rāmānuja does.

A glance through these three commentaries on these Sūtras convinces one of the superiority and reasonableness and also of the logical consistency of Sankara's interpretation. Moreover, it has the merit of dealing with the solution of an important doubt that arises in the mind of even a casual reader of the *Upanishads*, viz. the nature of Brahman—whether it is qualified or non-qualified; for the Sruti texts seem to support both views though they are contradictory. Rāmānuja and Nimbārka ignore such an important subject and see a less important subject discussed in these Sūtras. Secondly, they fail to bring out the force of the words of the Sūtras in bold relief as Sankara does e.g. 'twofold characteristic' of Sūtra 11 which refers to contradictory qualities in Sankara, but not so in the other two. They therefore seem to overlook what is actually

taught in the Sūtras and bring in a subject-matter not meant by the aphorist. We shall be doing an injustice to Bādarāyana to think with Rāmānuja and Nimbārka that he had omitted to discuss such an important subject in his work meant to systematize the teachings of the Upanishads. No doubt Rāmānuja broaches this subject in Sūtra 15 and 16 and says that both these views are to be accepted; but his interpretation of Sūtra 16 is indeed stretched and cannot be accepted, while Nimbārka does not discuss the subject at all. we cannot think with Rāmānuja that Bādarāyana disposed of such an important subject in one or two Sūtras in a topic which deals with quite a different subject-matter and of less importance. Rāmānuja's introducing this subject in Sūtra 15 and 16 is against the spirit of the Adhikarana (topic) even according to his own interpretation. It is something which he forcibly introduces out of all relation to the context, as anybody can easily see.

In fact according to their interpretation of this Adhikarana the whole of it looks redundant after what has been stated by them in 2. 1. 13. Finally the simile of the reflections of the sun is happier according to Sankara's interpretation than according to that of the other two and the text cited by Rāmānuja in Sūtra 18 holds good according to Sankara's view also and more aptly.

Sūtras 22-30 Sankara takes as a separate topic and interprets 22 to 24 as follows: What has been mentioned up to this (i.e. the two forms of Brahman mentioned in Brih. 2. 3. 1) is denied by the words "Not this, not this" (Brih. 2. 3. 6) and the Sruti says something more than that afterwards. It does not deny Brahman but Its forms mentioned earlier, their transcendental reality (22). The objection that Brahman is denied because It is not experienced is not

reasonable, for the Sruti says that Brahman exists, though It is not manifest on account of ignorance (23). And moreover It is realized in perfect meditation, so say the Sruti and Smriti (24). Therefore the Jiva becomes one with the Infinite when Knowledge dawns, for thus the scripture indicates (26). In the next two Sutras an objection is raised against Sutras 25 and 26: But on account of both difference and non-difference being taught by the Sruti, the relation between them is as between the serpent and its coil (27), or like that between light and its orb (28). Sutra 29 refutes this view and says: Or the relation is as given before in Sutras 25-26. And on account of the denial of everything else besides Brahman by the Sruti texts (30).

Râmânujā continues the previous topic up to 26. Sutras 22—26 according to him mean: The text (Brih. 2. 3. 6) denies the previously mentioned that-much-ness and says more than that. The two forms of Brahman (Brih. 2. 3. 1) do not exhaust Its attributes, for the text states further qualities after that. "For there is nothing higher than this 'not this'. Then comes the name, 'the Truth of truth'; for the Prânas are true and It is the truth of them." 'Prânas' here mean the souls, because they accompany the latter at death. The souls are true, because they do not undergo any change in their essential nature. The Lord is the Truth of these true souls, for these contract and expand with respect to intelligence, while He is unaffected. Thus the subsequent part of the text connects Brahman with some qualities. The clause "Not this, not this" does not deny the attributes of Brahman, but denies that Its nature is confined to these two forms only. The Sruti instruction is not unnecessary here, for though the world is seen, yet it is not known as a Prakâra or mode

of Brahman and that is what can be gathered only from the Sruti texts (22). So declares the Sruti. And Brahman's being differentiated by these two forms is realized even as Its being of the nature of intelligence is realized by repeated meditation (25). For all these reasons Brahman is regarded as Infinite, i.e. as possessing infinite attributes; for thus the attributes hold good, i.e. the two-fold characteristic of Sutra 22 (26). Sutras 27—30 are treated by Râmânujā as a separate topic. Sutras 27 and 28 give the Purvapaksha, as Sankara also says and 29 gives the Siddhânta; but the words 'as before' in the Sutra refer not to Sutras 25 and 26, but to 2. 3. 43.

Nimbârka follows Râmânujā in Sutras 22—24. The next two Sutras he interprets somewhat differently. Just as fire is manifested through the rubbing of wooden sticks, so is Brahman manifested in meditation (25). On realizing Brahman the soul becomes one with It (26). Sutras 27 and 28 he takes as the author's and not as the opponent's view. Sutra 27 describes that the relation between Brahman and the insentient world is as between the serpent and its coils (27) and the relation between the soul and Brahman is as between the orb and the light (28). But to an objection of the kind raised in Sutra 2. 1. 25 the answer is as before i.e. 2. 1. 27 (29). Moreover, the Supreme Self is not affected by the imperfection of the soul (30).

Sankara thus interprets "Not this, not this" as a denial of the two forms of Brahman mentioned in Brih. 2. 3. 1. Brahman can be described only as "Not this, not this" i.e. It is not what we see. Whatever we see is not Brahman as It is. Brahman is something different from all this manifested world. This interpretation is in keeping with scriptural teaching. Râmânujā and Nimbârka interpret that "Not this, not this"

denies only the limitation of Brahman's nature to only these two forms, in other words It has many more attributes than these two. The two forms are real and are only two of the infinite attributes of the Lord. This seems to be a total denial of the Upanishadic teaching. "Not this, not this" occurs in four different places in the Brih. Up. Even if Rāmānuja's explanation be allowed in Brih. 3. 2. 6—however strange and twisted it might seem, Brih. 4. 2. 4, 4. 4. 22 and 4. 5. 15 do not by any means yield to such an interpretation. It is true that we do find the scriptures dealing with both difference and non-difference; but with what object, is the question. It is not to establish that both are true, for they are mutually contradictory. A careful study of the scriptures convinces one that duality is taught in order to take the aspirant step by step through it to non-duality. Rāmānuja in his Bhāṣhya on these Sūtras criticizes Sankara saying that the Sṛuti could not have described these two forms only to deny it later on. But that this is a process the Sṛuti adopts is clear from Prajāpati's instruction to Indra in the *Chhândogya* or Varuna's teaching to Bhrigu in the *Taittiriya Upanishad*. The aspirant is gradually taken to higher and higher truths. Through duality he is led up to non-duality, the goal or final truth. Duality has not been praised anywhere in the scriptures, and no fruit is ascribed to it. On the other hand it is censured (*vide* Katha 2. 1. 10-11; Brih. 4. 4. 19; Mait. 4. 2 and 6. 8), which shows that the scriptures do not intend to posit duality. But non-duality is praised and immortality is said to be achieved by the knowledge of unity. According to the Purva Mimāṃsā principle, that which has no result of its own but is mentioned in connection with something else which has a result, is sub-

ordinate to the latter. Therefore duality which has no fruit of its own is subsidiary to non-duality which is the main purport of the Sṛuti texts.

A question, however, may arise: If everything is negated, what will be left? We shall by such a process arrive at nonentity. Not so. We cannot go on negating *ad infinitum*, but have to come finally to some basic reality, and this basic reality behind everything is the Ātman or Brahman. When we remove an object, space is left behind. Similarly, when everything we see is removed or negated, Brahman is left behind, which cannot be negated and which is the witness of everything. We cannot say that by negation we come to nonentity, for the very fact that we comprehend this nonentity shows that it is being illumined by the witnessing consciousness, the basic reality even behind this idea of nonentity. In this Sūtra the Sūtrakāra solves this doubt, showing that the negation concerns not Brahman, but only the two forms of it. To turn the drift of this discussion topsy turvy and establish the reality of the two forms is to ignore the spirit of scriptural teaching. Brih. 4. 2. 4, after saying, "This Self is that which has been described as "Not this, not this," says, "It is imperceptible" etc. Other texts also describe the self or Brahman as beyond comprehension. "There goes neither the eye, nor speech nor the mind; we know It not nor do we see how to teach about It. Different It is from all that is known, and is beyond the unknown as well" (Kena 1. 2-3); "Whence speech returns along with the mind without realizing It" (Taitt. 2. 9); also *Ibid* 3. 1. 6 and 3. 1. 8 and Katha 1. 3. 15. From these texts we find that nothing can be predicated of Brahman. From the Kena texts we find that we cannot say that Brahman is this and this in a positive

way. It is not what we see and therefore It can only be described as "Not this, not this" by denying everything we see in It. Again we have texts like, "The Ātman is smaller than the smallest, greater than the greatest" (Katha 1. 2. 20); neither gross nor fine," etc. which negate all duality and establish the Infinity of Brahman beyond all doubts.

Coming to the interpretation of Sutras 27—30, Sankara connects "or as before" in Sutra 29 with what immediately precedes in Sutras 25-26 and so it is happy. Rāmānuja connects it with Sutras 2. 3. 43 and so it is not so apt. Nimbārka's explanation is still far-fetched; for while Rāmānuja refers for the Siddhānta only to a previous Sutra, Nimbārka refers for an objection as well as a decision to Sutras in 2. 1. His interpretation of the whole topic thus appears to be much stretched.

That Sankara has followed the Sutrakāra faithfully in his interpretation of Sutras 11—30 will be clearer if we just try to see the reason why the latter treats of dream and deep sleep in this section which deals with the nature of Brahman. Sankara at the beginning of Chapter III, Section 1, says that the transmigration of the soul is taught in order to generate a spirit of Vairāgya (dispassion).

Sutras 1—10 of section 2 treat of the soul's states of dream and dreamless sleep. According to Sankara the very fact that the dream world does not fulfil the conditions of the time and space factors as in the waking state, shows that the dream world is illusory and therefore a creation of the soul and not of the Lord. From this he shows that the real nature of the Jiva is self-luminous and beyond all these states.

Thus Sutras 1—10 elucidate the real nature of the 'Thou' in "Thou art That". Sutras 11—21 give the nature of 'That' and Sutras 22—30 identify the two. Thus the place of Sutras 1—10 in this section is very significant. Rāmānuja and Nimbārka say that the creation of the dream world belongs to the Lord and not to the soul. If it were so, it should be as real as this world. Granting that it is the Lord's creation, of what significance is this subject in a section that deals with the nature of Brahman? It would have been apt in 2. 3 where creation is taught. If it be to create a spirit of Vairāgya, as Rāmānuja says at the beginning of Chapter 3, then it ought to have been included in section 1 which treats of the soul's transmigration with the same object, and thus be separated from section 2 where it is out of place.

The above analysis of Sutras 3. 2. 1—30 shows that Sankara has rightly grasped the spirit of Bādarāyana, while the other two commentators have sadly missed it.

A careful perusal of Sankara's commentary shows that he too, like the other great commentators, is justified in interpreting the Sutras in the way he has done. The fact is, Bādarāyana has systematized the philosophy of the *Upanishads* in his work and like them his Sutras also are all-comprehensive and so commentators make a mistake when they think that the Sutras propound only their doctrine and nothing else. The *Upanishads*, the *Brahma-Sutras* and the *Gītā* recognize the principle of Adhikāribheda and that is the reason why they are universally accepted by the Hindus of all classes and denominations.

# SHINTO OR THE WAY OF THE GODS

By H. OTOTSU

Shinto or Kami-no-Michi which means the Way of the Gods, is the original faith of the Japanese. This has been believed and practised by them from antiquity. It may be defined as nature-and-ancestor-worship, or religion of loyalty, or Emperor-worship. Mr. G. Kato, author of "A Study of Shinto, the Religion of the Japanese Nation", makes the observation that one of the most remarkable features of Shinto in its first and earliest stage is nature-worship (either in its simple or complex form) and adds that the ancient Japanese were surrounded on all sides by numberless divine beings, whom they called the "Eight Hundred Myriads of Gods". Although they had the belief that there were such a tremendous number of gods both in heaven and on earth, they worshipped Amaterasu-Omikami, the Sun-Goddess, with the most profound reverence. Who is this Amaterasu-Omikami? It is said in ancient history that the parents of this Goddess are the divinities known as Izanagi and Izanami, and that she presided with her two brothers over the Plain of High Heaven, the Vast Expanse of Ocean, and the Realm of Night. She made her grandson, Prince Ninigi, to come down to the earth and to become its ruler. When he was about to leave her, she blessed him saying:

"The Luxuriant Land of Reed Plains (original name of Japan) is a country which our descendants are to inherit. Go, therefore, Our Imperial Grandson, and rule over it! And may Our Imperial lineage continue unbroken and prosperous, co-eternal with Heaven and Earth!"

When he thus descended to the top of Mount Takachiho in Kyushu, the terrestrial guardian God, Okuninushi-no-Kami of Izumo, handed over his dominions to this Heavenly Prince. The origin of the Japanese Empire and its Emperors begins from here. Our first Emperor, Jimmu, who ascended the throne in 660 B.C. was the grandson of this celestial Prince. Since then Japan has been ruled by his descendants in an unbroken succession, of whom the present Emperor is the 124th Emperor of the same lineage. This is why we look upon each Emperor as a Divine Ruler of the nation descended from our Imperial Ancestress, the Sun-Goddess. If you can but realize this orthodox tradition, you will have no difficulty in understanding how we Japanese have been revering the Emperor, in what relation we stand with Him, and why we are ever prepared to offer ourselves courageously to the State in promoting the welfare of the Imperial Throne. Now I shall go back again to early Shinto.

Early Shinto, while believing in a continued existence beyond the grave, had no system of theology or ethics. It had no code of moral duties—no clear conception of loyalty or filial piety. But it taught the innate goodness of the human heart regarding human beings as virtuous by nature. "Follow the genuine impulses of your heart" was the essence of its ethical teaching. Besides this even the name of Shinto was unknown until Confucianism (the ethical system of the Northern Chinese) and Buddhism came to Japan in the sixth century. This ethical teaching and the positive doctrines of foreign faiths had naturally

an immense influence upon primitive Shinto. Particularly, Buddhism, which was the mother of civilization of Japan, had an overwhelming influence upon Shinto, and it culminated in the creation of Ryobu or Double Aspect Shinto at the beginning of the ninth century. In this new creed Shinto Deities were regarded as partial appearances or incarnations of Buddhist divinities. For example, our Ancestral Sun-Goddess was regarded as the Dainichi Nyorai (the primordial and eternal Buddha) and our God of War, Hachiman, as a Bosatsu (Bodhisatwa). Thus it may be said that Shinto was absorbed into Buddhism.

This state of things lasted well-nigh a thousand years, but in the fifteenth century further progress was made in the systematization of Shinto theology. The name of Ichijo Kanera (1402-1484) is prominent in this connection. Shinto, according to Kanera, teaches the existence of many deities, but metaphysically speaking they are one, because each deity is but a manifestation of the universal soul in a particular aspect of its activity and all the gods are one in spirit and entity, specially in the virtue of veracity. Izawa Nagahide, another Shinto scholar of the 18th century says, "The Eight Hundred Myriads of Gods are nothing but different manifestations of one and the same Deity Kunitokotachi-no-Kami who is eternal or the Eternal Divine Being of the Earth, the Great Unity of all Things in the Universe, the Primordial Being of Heaven and Earth."

In the course of the 18th century Shinto entered on a new path and prepared for another revival. All the earlier Shinto theorists had depended much upon either Buddhism or Confucianism in interpreting Shinto ideas : now the time became ripe for purging away the alien elements to a certain

degree and restoring early Shinto by means of scholarship. This was made possible by the philological studies of the ancient records. The greatest of the philologists and the pioneer of "Pure Shinto" was Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801). His contention was that Shinto, when purged of foreign accretions and influences, represented the pure, and therefore the best, inheritance of humanity from divine ages.

There was another aspect of revival of Shinto, namely, the appearance of Shinto teachers in the first half of the 19th century. Most of them were against the feudal system which had deprived the Emperor of his administrative power since the 12th century, and they endeavoured to infuse into the people the sense of loyalty to the Emperor and of revolt against the then actual ruler, Generalissimo Tokugawa. The principles of Shinto thus revived eventually became the basis of the Meiji Restoration in 1867—this restoration of power to the Emperor is really the starting-point of present Japan.

The essential characteristic of Shinto is purity of body and mind. The idea of purity, in early Shinto, was entirely physical or material but not mental, spiritual or ethical. But in its developed stage, inner purity or purity of heart is also emphasized. Ichijo-Kaneyoshi (1402-1481), a famous Shinto Scholar says, "There are two significations of purity in Shinto : one is outer purity or bodily purity and the other inner purity of heart. If a man is truly sincere in mind he will be sure to succeed in realizing a communion with the Divine. (This is no other than inner purity of heart.)"

Senge-Takatomi, the late Shinto High Priest of the Izumo Grand Shrine, who died in 1918, teaches us the same truth :

"Sincerity the single virtue is

That binds Divinity and man in one."

And continues :—

“Action sincere, by noble-minded  
man,  
Reflects the very self of the Unseen.”

Thus we may say that, like the universal love in Christianity or the unconditional benevolence in Buddhism, inner purity or sincerity is the guiding ethical principle of Shinto.

There are no graven images to represent Shinto Deities. A famous Japanese historian, Ise Teijo (1715-1785), forbade worshipping Deities by means of statues or images. He says :

“Never make an image in order to represent a Deity. To worship a deity is to directly establish a felt relation of our heart to the living Divinity through sincerity or truthfulness on our part. If we, however, try to establish a relation between a Deity and us indirectly by means of an image, the image will itself stand in the way and prevent us from realizing our religious purpose to accomplish a direct communion with the Deity. So an image made by mortal hands is of no use in Shinto worship.” (Study of Shinto, the Religion of the Japanese Nation, p. 185.) There is, however, an Emblem of the Deity, which generally takes the form of a Sword, a Mirror, or a Jewel. This Emblem is not exposed to the public view. It is kept within the Shrine or Sanctuary. But we do not regard the Emblem as the Deity, nor do we believe that the Shrine embodies the Deity. We are taught to worship and pray to the Deity concerned at the shrine “in spirit and in truth”.

The method of worship in Shinto consists of obeisance, offerings, and prayers. The offerings are primarily food and drink. Formerly cloth was added to these but eventually a symbolic offering known as Gohei came into use consisting of strips of paper attached to a

wand and placed on the altar. Human sacrifice seems to have been made in the remote ages. According to an old legend, there had been a certain intelligent man Koromonoko. He was ordered to offer his life to a River-God, but he thought it was not worth while to sacrifice his life to a God who might be a false one. So in order to convince himself of the genuineness of this God, he threw some dry calabashes, a kind of gourd whose hard shell is used as vessels to hold water or *saké*, to the river and cried out from its bank :—

“O, Thou River-God, if Thou dost persist in Thy desire to have me, sink these calabashes and let them not rise to the surface, then shall I know Thou art a true God and will enter the water of my accord. But if Thou canst not sink the calabashes, I shall, of course, know that Thou art a false God, for whom, why should I spend my life in vain?”

But the calabashes did not sink and consequently Koromonoko was saved. Now-a-days rice-cakes also form a part of the offerings to certain shrines. I am told that they symbolize human sacrifice.

Purification is essential before worship. The Harai or wind-purification and Misogi or water-purification are the principal forms of purification ceremonies. In the courtyard of every shrine, there is a font where the worshippers make their ablutions by washing their hands and rinsing their mouths before worship. But these are only outward purification. The most important one is the purification of the inner heart.

Shinto at present is divided into two, namely, the National Shinto Faith (or Non-Sectarian Shinto) which is symbolized by shrines from time immemorial, and Sectarian or Denominational Shinto which developed since the 18th century. The former is not treated as a religion



but it is taught in schools to the present younger generation under the name of Japanese National Ethics. The latter is officially recognized as a religion. According to the official report of 1932, there were 111,777 shrines (against 71,351 Buddhist temples), including 200 governmental and national shrines, 49,454 Prefectural and village shrines, 61,500 private shrines, and 123 soldiers' shrines. The number of private shrines has been steadily decreasing from 136,783 in 1880 to 61,500 in 1932. There were many too superstitious and barbarous ones among them and the decrease speaks of the healthy progress of the religious ideas of the people and the radical policy of the Government. The governmental and national shrines are maintained at the expense of the Treasury but those belonging to other grades are under the care of local communities and parishioners. Most of these are dedicated to Gods or Goddesses of Nature, (such as Gods or Goddesses of seas, rivers, wind, fire, mountains, etc.), Emperors, Empresses, Imperial Princes, loyal subjects or to one's ancestors who generally figure on the pages of authentic national or local history.

The Shinto priests who serve at the Shrines are rather ritualists, and it is their duty to see to all matters concerning rites and festivals and the upkeep of the respective shrines. They consider it a pride to dissociate themselves from the propagation of the Faith. But their service is requisitioned on all important occasions calling for august rites and ceremonies. In addition to this, nowadays, it has become customary for them to officiate at weddings and funerals. But I have never heard of Buddhist priests officiating at wedding ceremonies in Japan.

Now let me refer to some aspects of Shinto shrines. At first, I shall briefly touch upon the history of the most honoured and revered shrines in Japan. They are the Ise Great Shrines, consisting of the "Naiku" or Inner Shrine and the "Geku" or Outer Shrine. The Inner Shrine embodies the Sacred Mirror, one of the Three Sacred Treasures which were handed by the Sun-Goddess to Prince Ninigi when he was about to descend from Heaven to the earth. The Mirror is the most important of all, for the Sun-Goddess asked Prince Ninigi to regard it as her own Self; and so the successive Emperors kept it with them in the Palace. But in the reign of Emperor Sujin (92 B.C.) it was enshrined at Yamato near Nara with a view to enabling the people to venerate it and at the same time to avoid any possible desecration by keeping it in the Imperial Palace. And in the regime of Emperor Suinin (5 B.C.), that was about 90 years later, it was removed to its present holy abode in Ise. So, this Shrine is as old as Japan herself. At the Geku or Outer Shrine Toyouke-no-Omikami, the God of food and clothing, who accompanied Prince Ninigi to earth is enshrined. This was removed here from Manai near Kyoto by Emperor Yuraku in 478 A.D. in fulfilment of a revelation of the Sun-Goddess.

It may interest you to know that it has been the custom to raze these Shrines once in every 20 years, and to build new ones in their stead on neighbouring plots assigned for the purpose with the result that they look always new in contrast to their age-old tradition. These are constructed of Hinoki, Japanese cypress, in the archaic Japanese style which existed before the introduction of Buddhist religion and Chinese architecture.

Ise has been regarded as the holy of holies of the Japanese nation. The Emperor himself goes there in person to pay homage to these Shrines. Cabinet Ministers, Governors-General, Ambassadors, Ministers, Generals, and Admirals and Consuls themselves go there to invoke blessings on them for the satisfactory discharge of duties in their new appointments. Pilgrims from every quarter and from every class pour in every day throughout the year disregarding their respective faiths.

To illustrate one aspect of Shinto, that is, the nature-worship, I wish now to make a passing reference to the Shrine of the Wind-God in the precincts of the Outer Shrine in Ise. It was in 1293 that this God destroyed by means of a powerful hurricane the mighty flotilla sent by Kubla Khan, the Mongolian ruler of China, to invade Japan, and crushed once and for all his ambition to bring Japan under him. Since then his shrine was elevated in commemoration of his divine help which saved the country's independence.

The second national shrine is The Meiji Shrine which was completed in 1920 at Yoyogi in Tokio in dedication to Emperor Meiji the Great who passed away in 1912 after a brief illness. He was the most beloved of the Japanese nation. His demise cast such a gloom over the entire country that an English correspondent telegraphed home saying, "Japan is going into a decline with the death of her Great Emperor."

As any other great shrine, this is also built of hinoki wood in the time-honoured style. The symbolic entrance known as the "torii" is one of the largest in Japan, itself made of the same wood of about 1,700 years old brought from Mount Arisan in Formosa. Someone has said, "Torii is quite simple and yet noble and it is the symbol of the Japanese nation." The compound of

the Shrine known as the Inner Garden covers an area of about 175 acres wooded with trees of different species found in Japan. This Shrine which is an embodiment of beauty and art is a living monument of the imperishable love of the Japanese people towards this august Ruler.

Yoyogi without any exaggeration is the second Ise. Millions of worshippers throng from all the four corners of the Empire to pay their respect to this Emperor. No foreign tourist will ever miss to visit this spot.

There are many shrines which are erected to the memory of those who were intensely loyal to the Throne and led exemplary lives worthy of imitation as models. The Minoatogawa Shrine in Kobe built in honour of Kusunoki-Masashige (1294-1336) is the most prominent of these. He was a staunch Imperialist who sacrificed his life by fighting against the then Generalissimo who deprived the Emperor of his administrative power. The next in importance is the one at Akasaka in Tokio where General Nogi, who had a distinguished military career, is deified. It was this General who captured Port Arthur and effected the capitulation of General Stoessel in the Russo-Japanese war in 1905. He was so attached to Emperor Meiji that, when the Emperor died in 1912 and when the Imperial cortege was about to leave the Palace, he committed harakiri—suicide—which his devoted wife followed. The farewell poem which he left behind was translated by an English scholar and reads as follows :

"He mingles with the Gods on High,  
my Mighty Sovereign Lord :  
And with intensely yearning heart I  
follow Thee Heavenward."

The Shinto Pantheon will, I am sure, be further increased in the near future by erecting one or two shrines to the

late Fleet Admiral Togo (1847-1934) who died in 1934. He was the Nelson of Japan who annihilated the Russian Baltic Fleet in the Japan Sea in 1905. By the way, in a report submitted by him to Emperor Meiji, he had attributed this great victory to the grace received from Heaven owing to the glorious virtues of the Emperor. The entire nation identified itself with this belief as all were possessed of the same Shinto ideas, and offered their congratulations and thanks to the Emperor and to all Members of the Shinto Pantheon presided by the Ancestral Sun-Goddess.

It is Sectarian or Denominational Shinto that is recognized as a religion. And it is placed on the same footing as any other religion. The priests of this category interest themselves in disseminating their gospel. According to Mr. Kato, Sectarian Shinto reveals a closer aspect of universalism than Shinto of the National Faith. He says so because the former is more remotely connected with the nation than the latter. Consequently, some Shinto Sects have Kami or Gods to whom no reference is made in the history of Japan. For instance, the Kami or God whom Konko Sect worships has little or no connection with the Kojiki or the Nihonshoki, the time-honoured historical chronicles of Japan, and so far it has been a universal religion but not a national, and is fairly free from national tradition. (The God of this Sect is called Tenchi-Kane-no-Kami which means Heaven-and-Earth-Including-Deity, i.e. the Absolute Divinity, the Boundless One with Heaven and Earth within its own Divine Self. It is, therefore, quite natural that this Shinto Sect with such a universal God at its centre, is of a universal nature.) There are thirteen officially recognized Sects most of which were established since the 18th century.

(They are Fuso, Konko, Misogi, Shinshu, Shinto, Taisei, Tenri, Jikko, Kurosumi, Ontake, Shinri, Shusei-ha and Taisha.)

The number of Sectarian Shinto adherents is 17,500,000 as against 42,000,000 Buddhists and 254,000 Christians. Tenri Sect is one of the most popular one having four million followers. The God this Sect worships is called Tenrio-no-Mikoto who is believed by the adherents of this Sect to have created man and all else on the earth and to protect and help all human life to procreate and progress without a moment's pause now and for all time. According to the teachings of this Sect, our bodies are not ours, but His. We must sooner or later return our bodies to Him, which have been temporarily borrowed. This returning our bodies is not called by the term "Death". It is called "Denaori" or re-appearance. These believers do not accept the theory of life after death in connection with another world, but do believe in re-appearance in this world. The distorted working of our minds is called "Hokori" or "dust". There are eight principal kinds of "dust": Craving, grudging, self-loving, hating, envying, raging, coveting, and self-exalting. In order to live bright and healthy lives, Tenri Sect followers have to exert their utmost to sweep away the dust which is the cause of their ailments. Followers of this Sect endeavour to bring happiness not to themselves alone, but to all. As an example of this fact, I shall tell you a small story. In Shanghai there are numerous houses which are not yet connected to the sewerage system and therefore night-soil has to be disposed of by Chinese coolies. In 1931 when the Sino-Japanese incident occurred these coolies refused to remove the ordure from the area where Japanese civilians were resident with the result

that the increasing accumulation day by day proved to be a great annoyance. Then a group of Japanese men and women belonging to Tenri Sect got together and voluntarily attended to this dirty job as quietly as possible till the Chinese resumed their work in that quarter. Although this seems to be a trifling matter, I cannot help calling it a living example of "bringing happiness not to themselves alone, but to all".

However, it is no misrepresentation to say that whoever the God of each Sect is and whatever its nature may be, every Shinto Sect teaches loyalty to the Emperor in one form or other.

Shinto is the original indigenous faith of Japan. At first it was quite primitive, but in the course of the last nearly 2,600 years, it has followed its own natural course of growth side by side with the long development of the Japanese national life. It is true that Shinto has been influenced to a great extent by alien teachings such as Buddhism and Confucianism, but has never been annihilated wholesale by imported foreign creeds. On the contrary it has maintained its originality as vigorously as ever. The peculiar religious temperament of the Japanese is responsible for their conception that the Emperor is a visible deity or a God incarnate. This idea is completely in accord with the Japanese mind of the present age of enlightenment, as it has always been: and in this very idea is rooted the consciousness of the Japanese or their attitude of patriotic reverence towards the Emperor. The virtues of Shinto are simplicity, cleanliness and purity, filial piety, reverence to Ancestors, and loyalty to the Emperor.

Shinto has, indeed, been the faith of the heart and life of every Japanese whether male or female, high or low, old or young, literate or illiterate, from

time immemorial. This is the reason that has made the State and the people to preserve and maintain such a huge number of shrines throughout the country and multitudes of pilgrims to flock in at the Ise Great Shrines, the Meiji Shrine, and so forth.

Lafcadio Hearn calls Shinto the "Religion of Loyalty," and confesses that so trite an English word as loyalty which is a dead rendering cannot cover all the connotation of the original Japanese word 'chu'. He wishes to call it the "Mystical Exaltation" or "A Sense of Uttermost Devotion to the Jinno or the Divine Ruler of the Nation." Mr. G. Kato to whom I have already referred says, "I should call Shinto a form of Emperor worship or Mikadoism, a faith in the Divine Ruler; a manifestation, coupled with religious zeal, of "Yamatodamashii," or the "Soul of Japan."

As I said before there are 13 Shinto Sects and 17 and a half million adherents. But, I may say, every Japanese, whatever Sect he may belong to or whatever his personal religion may be, is a holder of the National Shinto Faith represented by Shrines leading to Mikadoism.

In conclusion, let me give an English translation of Emperor Meiji's Rescript on Education which every Japanese knows by heart, issued on October 30th, 1890, as it contains our traditional ideas and principles connected with the National Shinto Faith. It reads as follows:

"Know ye, Our subjects!

Our Imperial Ancestors have founded Our Empire on a basis broad and everlasting and have deeply and firmly implanted virtue. Our subjects, ever united in loyalty and filial piety, have from generation to generation illustrated the beauty thereof. This is the glory of the fundamental

character of Our Empire, and herein also lies the source of our education. Ye, our subjects, be filial to your parents, affectionate to your brothers and sisters; as husbands and wives be harmonious, as friends true; bear yourselves in modesty and moderation; extend your benevolence to all; pursue learning and cultivate arts, and thereby develop your intellectual faculties and perfect your moral powers; furthermore, advance the public good and promote common interests; always respect the Constitution and observe the laws; should any emergency arise, offer yourselves courageously to the State; and thus

guard and maintain the prosperity of Our Imperial Throne, coeval with Heaven and earth. So shall ye not only be our good and faithful subjects, but render illustrious the best traditions of your forefathers.

"The way here set forth is indeed the teaching bequeathed by Our Imperial Ancestors, to be observed alike by Their Descendants and subjects, infallible for all ages and true in all places. It is Our wish to lay it to heart in all reverence, in common with you, Our subjects, that we may all thus attain to the same virtue."

## A LAST WISH

BY PROF. E. E. SPEIGHT

If I should go without a word  
Of all my heart has seen,  
Of the great secrets I have heard,  
And the heavens where I have been,

Upraise no stone upon my grave,  
Nor set a rail around,  
But plant a woodland tree, to wave  
Above with whispering sound.

That I may speak, through bole and branch,  
Through bud and quivering leaf,  
A mellow language that shall stanch  
Some darker flow of grief.

That I may hold out shielding arms  
Green with the surge of spring,  
And rich in shelter from alarms  
Or winter's harassing.

That deep in earth and sunward high  
My fulness may assuage  
All anguished creatures drawing nigh  
My open harbourage.

For so have I been given ease  
And speeded on my way  
By friends like noble forest trees  
On many a bitter day.

# HISTORY OF THE VEDĀNTIC THOUGHT

BY SWAMI SATSWARUPANANDA

*(Continued from the last issue)*

Next comes Rāmānuja with his devastating polemics. He is the most powerful of Sankara's opponents. But the power and beauty of the logic of Rāmānuja and Madhva would remain a sealed book to those who want to learn Vedānta through English or any language other than Sanskrit. Here an attempt will be made to give a mere general outline of their system and nothing more. Rāmānuja's Reality is a concrete personality, a determinate whole, which has individual souls and matter as its body, Itself being their soul. It is differentiated into matter and individual souls but has not been wholly so. It preserves its identity and separateness from the many in the same way as the soul does from the body and the senses. It is immanent as well as transcendent. It is neither the abstract Absolute nor merely the totality of matter and individual souls. It is willing, planning, directing, loving personality, suffusing, comprehending, and transcending each and all of the universe. It is not devoid of all qualities but the possessor of infinite auspicious qualities in infinite degrees. Though the world of souls and matter derive their power and being from It, whose modes they are, they are eternally separate from It, their distinguishing qualities being essential and not adventitious. So Rāmānuja's conception of Reality is not different from that of Yādavaprakāsa and Nimbārka. It is Saguna and Savishesha i.e. with qualities and determinate, both immanent and transcendent. But while Yādava's

Reality is only Being (Sanmātra), Ramanuja's and Nimbarka's Reality possesses, being, consciousness, and above all bliss. Rāmānuja, moreover, is pronouncedly anthropomorphic—he is a theist with all his merits and defects.

While mainly agreeing with the Bhedābhedins the Rāmānujists have some grave and important differences with them. The former make a distinction between the Absolute and Isvara which the latter would not admit. According to Rāmānuja the Absolute is not something abstract. It is the same as Isvara, the creator, preserver, and destroyer of the universe—there is not the slightest distinction between the two. Then the relation subsisting between Isvara on the one hand and souls and matter on the other is not the same in the two theories. The Bhedābhedins make it one of part and the whole, whereas the Visishtādvaitins make it one of Prakāra and Prakārin, a relation that is best expressed by the example of the soul and the body. The relation between the soul and the body is not the same as the one between the part and the whole. The soul is not really affected by the affection of the body, which is not true in the case of the other relation. This relation saves God from being caught in the sorrows and miseries and imperfections of the world of matter and souls, leaving Him free, though immanent in them, to fashion, order, and guide them, through His own laws imposed on matter and through individual free will and sense

of responsibility in the individual souls in the state of bondage. Mukti or emancipation consists in the full recognition by the entire personality of the individual of his own servanthship of the Lord and of the enjoyment of the beatific vision and bliss eternal, deigned to him by an all-loving Lord. In Mukti there is no loss of personality followed by a unification with what the Râmânujists call a blank void miscalled the Absolute. Râmânuja's main difference with the Bhedâbhedins lies in the nature of the relation subsisting between God on the one hand, and matter and souls on the other. Between them the relation of Abhedha or non-difference is altogether denied even in part or aspect. If we admit but once the concepts of Jiva and Jagat, individual souls and matter, we cannot with any degree of consistency establish their relation of Abhedha with God or Brahman. It is all Bheda or difference from eternity to eternity, though they are by no means outside the infinite God but subsist as His body deriving their being and activity from Him, who through His real power of Mâyâ can do and undo anything according to His absolute free will. God is not spent up in His manifestations but far transcends them; and He is immanent in His creation in five distinct forms of which three are important in philosophy—as the indwelling spirit of the individual souls who are His bodies, guiding them, joining the fruits of their Karmas and attracting them to Him in diverse ways through a continuous inward pull; as the material cause of this gross manifested world, in which capacity the subtle conscious and unconscious ultimates are His bodies; and as this gross manifested world, when this gross matter and gross individuals are His bodies. But though everything, subtle or gross, is His body, He is not in any way

affected by their constant changes and favourable and unfavourable affections—throughout the processes of creation and dissolution, He remains the same unchanged Personality.

To come to a thorough-going dualism or pluralism there is but one step. That matter and souls are different from God has been preached by Râmânuja. But he is rather halting. They are eternally separate from Him but are organically connected with Him as body and senses are with the soul. So in some sense He is the world and individual souls. To the freed or emancipated souls they are God—God is peeping through them all. Still Râmânuja would not admit the Bhedâbhedin's position—so logically untenable it is to him. To make this separateness complete is the task of Madhva, who regrets Râmânuja's position in the same way as the latter regrets the position of the Bhedâbhedins. According to Madhva God, souls, and matter are completely and eternally separate, the last two depending on the first in every possible way. God is merely the efficient cause of the world and not the material cause as well, as all the other exponents of Vedânta hold. He moulds the world from an extraneous matter for the enjoyment or suffering or both of equally extraneous souls whose beginningless Karmas are responsible for their joys and sorrows. The relation between God and individual souls is one of master and servant, which does not cease even in Mukti. They are, no doubt, endowed with intelligence, but it is limited, whereas God's infinite intelligence is spread everywhere within and beyond time. Though there are so many extraneous things, with and for which God works, yet His irresistible will is not hampered by them in any way. He can do and undo anything by the mere fiat of His will. According to Madhva the world of

matter and souls is too palpably real to be denied. Its unreality would go against the Sruti passages which state that by the knowledge of the One the knowledge of all is attained. Madhva, however, has one very queer view about the Jivas. He condemns a class of Jivas to eternal hell and blesses another class with eternal heaven—a view, which is rather Semitic than Aryan.

In Madhva the swing of the pendulum from absolute monism to thorough-going pluralism is complete. There are other commentators on the *Brahma-Sutras* who came after him; but except slight modifications here and there, all the later commentaries are but echoes of one or other of the previous ones, having little of originality and force of their fore-runners. Leaving aside some of Madhva's unphilosophical statements, such as eternal perdition etc., if we take his philosophy as a whole and try to judge it aright, we cannot but give it the place which its own intrinsic worth has acquired for it, and, may be, will acquire a little more. Mādhva philosophy is a wholesome improvement on the atheistic dualism of the Sāṅkhya philosophy and as the other side of the shield of Gaudapāda-Sankara philosophy or truly speaking of the Buddhist nihilistic philosophy. But to judge this philosophy one is to take one's stand on solid ground and not fly about in the sky, one must be a geologist and not a stargazing astronomer. Here in this hard world pluralism is as true as monism. One plus one would not have been two, had there been no concept of two. One is one; it can neither produce zero, nor two, nor three. One is running through all the numbers, but there are as many numbers as well. The Many is saturated with the One, there is hardly a point where the One is not; but along with the One resides the Many, potentially

or actually, in the same moment and on the same point. The spiritual entity does not occupy space as a material thing does. Hence there is nothing illogical in the statement that the one spiritual entity resides in, through and beyond each material atom and individual soul, and pervades and transcends them all. If the Buddhist statement, "nothing abides and therefore nothing is" is true, then "the Many eternally is and therefore it is true", equally holds good. With the change of forms entity perishes—is a statement that is yet to be proved. Forms change but concepts abide, and concepts and percepts are eternally wedded. Change means manifestation and its withdrawal, with as much surety of another manifestation and withdrawal. Given infinite time and space, eternal souls, and one infinite all-intelligent, all-powerful architect nothing of the above is impossible. And what theory is there that does not admit it in some form or other? Even the monists and nihilists admit it with only one difference that it is all Māyā and no real reality. But Māyā once admitted is eternal both ways, has neither beginning nor end. And on this river of Māyā monists, nihilists, and pluralists of all shades sail in the same boat. After a too long age of idealism the realistic phase of Truth stood in need of emphasis and Madhva has done it with all the virility of his personality.

All these halting monists and pluralists together with the uncompromising Madhva have joined in one chorus against the Gaudapāda-Sankara school of monism. They are one in their refutation of the Māyāvāda and the Nirguna Brahman theory—the former being the necessary deduction of the latter. From this one need not think that Sankara philosophy has been eclipsed or impaired in the least, for there have arisen all along great thinkers and writers within



the fold of Sankara, who, by their powerful dialectics, have silenced all oppositions as quickly as they arose. And because every philosophy ultimately rests on its epistemology it is on this field that all the pitched battles have been fought. Whether there is indeterminate knowledge or Nirvikalpa Jñāna and, if there is one, whether its certitude is greater than the determinate, are the questions whose answers give shape and direction to all philosophies. Sankara philosophy answers them in the positive while other schools of Vedānta answer them in the negative—seeds differing, different trees grow up. Now how to judge between the two?—there is no sure standard to judge by. The same scriptural passages from which Sankara derives his theory yield different meanings to other commentators. Experience fares no better. And these Āchāryas are all honourable men. When experience and scriptures fail to bring in a verdict, it is useless to argue about them. Thinkers are free to join either party. And yet to make the scriptural passages like “who will see, hear, etc. whom” and the like, yield a meaning different from that of Sankara and to deny the existence and superiority of Nirvikalpa Jñāna in the face of such explicit passages appear to us to be real text-torturing. And if this is once admitted there is no other alternative but to join Sankara. The later commentators were all fully aware of this; so they tried their level best to cavil at this theory of knowledge. Closely attached to this is the Nirguna Brahman theory. If Nirvikalpa Jñāna is highest, surest, and most abiding, its content must be the highest and the most abiding entity. We have advisedly used the word ‘content’, because it has become a fashion nowadays to deride Nirvikalpa Jñāna and Nirguna Brahman as ‘contentless’, ‘blank’,

‘void’. Closer examination is bound to reveal to these critics that they are none of these—they are all content. Content does not necessarily mean division, dual or plural. Indeterminateness, as it is used in Sankara’s philosophy, is not vagueness but means a crystal-clear something, which loses much of its own-ness when duality of any sort comes in, which revolts and illudes our grasp when any attempt is made to hedge it round. Both the Sankarites and their critics use the word ‘contentless’, but with what a world of difference in meaning. We have spoken of Nirvikalpa Jñāna and Nirguna Brahman as two different things. But in reality they are not different, they are one and the same thing. What is epistemologically the Nirvikalpa Jñāna is ontologically Nirguna Brahman. And if this Nirguna Brahman is once admitted, Māyāvāda becomes a necessity. If, truly speaking, Brahman is Nirguna and therefore Nirvisesha i.e. without difference, then these differences that we experience in our present state of consciousness must be something that is not truly real, as real as Nirguna Brahman, that is not unreal either, as unreal as a square circle or the horns of a hare. They must be somewhere in the twilight, in the blending of light and shade, in the shade of reason and in the light of experience—not of all experience but of experience of the present state of consciousness to be stultified by a higher stage testified by the experience of the Yogins and Jñānins and by some of the important scriptural passages. And this is Māyāvāda. Nirvikalpa Jñāna, Nirguna Brahman, and Māyāvāda are the three corner-stones of Sankara’s philosophy, round which battles have raged fiercest. Common sense tells us that these are not matters for reason but for faith, training, and experience. But when arguments are adduced against these,

the upholders have but one duty of defending them by counter-arguments. It is better to leave out Nirvikalpa Jñāna and Nirguna Brahman from our account of this wordy war for the simple reason that modern thinkers and readers are more apt to form their own opinion about these in the light of modern knowledge than to be guided by set rules of scriptural interpretations promulgated by the ancient commentators and Sutrakāras. It is more fruitful, however, to study their discussion on the Mâyāvāda.

Critical students of Sankara's commentaries on the *Brahma-Sūtras* and the *Gītā* find two apparently contradictory accounts of Mâyā, which, running through almost all his followers, have supplied much confusion to unwary readers and critics. The notion that one gets of it from Sankara's famous introduction to the commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtras* is that it is of the nature of false knowledge, of mistaking one thing for another, that it is beginningless and endless and natural to beings, and that, as such, it resides in the Jivas or individual souls. The adjectives 'endless' and 'natural to beings' are however modified slightly by his other statements viz. that it vanishes in an individual at the dawn of true knowledge. From the commentary on the *Gītā* one gets the idea that it is Lord's i.e. Brahman's Sakti or power, that the power and the possessor of power are the same and not different, and that Saguna and Savisesha Brahman i.e. Brahman with attributes and differentiation is not different from Nirguna and Nirvisesha Brahman or Brahman without attributes and differentiation. So there seem to be certain contradictions between the two views; and those who see these contradictions in Sankara or say that Sankara was not very particular or precise about the

term on which hanged the whole of the system, see the repetition of these contradictions in his followers or divide them into two or more classes holding different views on Mâyā and thus forming different schools of Sankara's Vedānta. Before examining this view of the critics, it is well to give a brief account of Mâyā as given by some of the famous followers of Sankara.

According to Mandana or Suresvarāchārya (A.D. 800), Mâyā is false knowledge residing in individual souls. It is neither existent nor non-existent. It produces the individual souls, who in their turn produce it. This goes on from eternity to eternity till the dawning of right knowledge, when it vanishes altogether and Brahman alone remains. Its relation with the individual souls seems to be anomalous, but it is due to its very nature which evades all definition and is therefore said to be something indescribable. So we see, it is hardly an entity, and the part it plays in the world-appearance is merely that of an instrument—it is not even recognized as its material. Sarvajñātma-muni (A.D. 900) follows Suresvara. But Padmapādāchārya (A.D. 820) and his follower Prakāśātman (A.D. 1200) give greater substantiality to it and make it reside in Brahman. It is not a power but an entity having powers, through which it brings about the world-appearance. It is called Sakti or power because of its dependence on Brahman. Vāchaspati Misra (A.D. 840) makes it co-existent with Brahman and gives it a somewhat great share in the creation of the world-appearance than does Suresvara, whom he follows generally. Vāchaspati has however made one very clear statement viz. that the world is not a subjective fiction but has an objective reality though its nature is something indefinable. So Vāchaspati stands in the middle between which

appear to be two extreme views of Suresvara and Padmapāda. According to Vidyāranya (A.D. 1350) *Mâyâ* is the Sakti of Brahman, which together with It creates the world, whose being-portion is derived from Brahman and the name-and-form-portion from *Mâyâ*. One Brahman looked through *Mâyâ* appears as many, to whom it imparts whatever orderliness there is among them. Madhusudana (A.D. 1530) speaks of *Mâyâ* as illusion or delusion and yet as not something negative but as a power residing in Brahman, as the source of all subsequent illusions, as the material cause of matter and mind and of all diversities. It is not something imagined hypothetically or a mere logical necessity, but something actually felt though as something incongruous, carrying its own existence as well as negation with it, persisting through and giving rise to the empirical self and its numerous objects. It is neither existent nor non-existent, it is beginningless and endless, disappearing for one who attains true knowledge of the Self or Brahman. So after hearing all these expounders of *Mâyâ*, those who find contradictions or vagueness about the concept in Sankara find the same in all his followers; and those who have understood Sankara aright find contradictions nowhere. Some kind of vagueness, however, there must be about *Mâyâ*, for, as Mandana says, its nature is something inexplicable, had it not been so, it would be an entity, which it is not.

Now, do these views really present contradictions? What are these contradictions? Is it that it is sometimes spoken of as residing in the Jivas and sometimes in Brahman? Or is it that it is sometimes reduced to a mere false knowledge and sometimes raised to omnipotence, the *de facto* creator? Let us take the last issue first and see

if there is any real contradiction in it. The question of increase or decrease of power does not come in at all. It is false knowledge, which makes the one appear as many, and thus creates the universe with all its laws and orders. True knowledge is the knowledge of Brahman, which is one; it is true because it is revealed in intuition and praised in the intuitional language of the *Vedas*. False knowledge too is of Brahman, of the Unity, for there is nothing else but It of which there can be any knowledge. But itself diversified, it makes the Unity appear as many and diversified. That false knowledge or empirical knowledge is manifold is a common experience needing no further proof. It is called false because it changes, contradicts itself, and vanishes at the dawn of intuition, because it hides the real nature of things and presents them differently. But it is not false like a square-circle, as we have said before. So this diversity, which is our universe of matter and mind, is in one sense the creation of this false knowledge or *Mâyâ*, and in this sense it is almost omnipotent. It is a Sakti or power, or rather *the* Sakti, for all other Saktis are derived from it. It is not non-existent, for how can non-existence make one many, or appear as many, or can itself change and bring about changes? It is something intensely positive, the source of all action, of evolution and dissolution. And yet when the intuition of Nirguna Brahman comes, it vanishes altogether, its stultification is complete. And for this reason existence cannot be predicated of it, as existence cannot go out of existence. But it should never be forgotten that here 'existence' has been taken in Sankara's sense i.e. in truly philosophical sense and not in its ordinary loose sense. *Mâyâ* or false knowledge exists as truly as or more truly than the sun

exists or the planets exist and as truly disappears as they and again abides in existence as truly as the stuff out of which the worlds are built. But this is not the philosophical sense in which Sankara uses it. To him, as to all true philosophers, 'existence' is that which remains the same in and beyond all times. In that sense *Mâyâ* is not, is not 'existent'. And no-one in his senses can deny this.

Next we come to the question : where does it reside, in the individual souls or in Brahman? The question itself shows that it has been asked from the empirical point of view. For, from the transcendent view-point it is non-existent and to ask where a non-existent thing is, is pure nonsense. And where can it be from the empirical view-point but in him who feels it? It must be in the individual souls. But the individual souls are its products and how can cause be in its effect when the effect is not produced? But the critics forget that from the empirical point of view i.e. from that standpoint where alone causality is possible, the Vedântins hold both cause and effect to be eternally existing—there never was a time when either of them was not. Both *Mâyâ* the cause and *Mâyâ* the effects are beginningless. Wherever there is the cause there are its effects, whether manifested or not; and wherever there is an effect, there lurks the cause, whether detected or not. Cause and effect are not two different things but one thing viewed differently and hence serving different pragmatic purposes according to manifestations. So the question, how can *Mâyâ* reside in individual souls, its products, does not arise at all, both existing from beginningless time. But does it not make Mukti or emancipation impossible? Vedântins admit it. Within *Mâyâ* or the domain of false knowledge and

hence causality there can never be Mukti. It is when one transcends *Mâyâ*, goes beyond false knowledge, or in other words it is when true knowledge dawns, that Mukti is possible—in fact true knowledge itself is Mukti.

If this be so, if *Mâyâ* or false knowledge resides in individuals in bondage, why then does Sankara following the *Gitâ* sometimes speak of *Mâyâ* as Lord's Sakti? Can false knowledge reside in true knowledge? This question too is asked from the empirical standpoint, for there is no false knowledge in intuition. False knowledge, as we have seen, really lies in the individuals who feel it, who are in bondage. But in every mistake there must be something to be mistaken. And this is Brahman or the Lord. He, the One, is mistaken by the individual souls as many. But *Mâyâ* is Lord's Sakti in a more positive sense. Mistaking is a function which is not innate in individual souls, for had it been so Mukti would have been impossible—the true nature of things does not change. Were false knowledge a part of the nature of individual souls, they could never go out of it; the dawning of true knowledge would have been rendered impossible. But as it is, it does not form any part of their nature. If this be so, it means it does not originally (if such a term can be used) and intrinsically lie with them. Where does it rest then, this shuttlecock between the individual souls and Brahman? The individual souls are true knowledge in essence and so is Brahman; whence is this unwelcome guest then? Brahman, which is pure being, pure knowledge, and pure bliss, has a power, which, without constituting its essence, makes for the appearance of ever-changing diversity. As a power it is in Brahman without being of it. Ever changing and causing changes it is not an entity; stultified by

intuition it is non-existent; hence duality does not come in. Within the domain of reason and experience it is and is more real than the totality of its products, which constitute the universe. As in Brahman, it is power and not false knowledge. Changing and making for appearances it cannot be given the dignity of Reality which does not change. So being neither ultimately real nor altogether unreal it is something inexpressible, it is *Mâyâ*. Hence it has been called the Lord's *Mâyâ-sakti*. In the absolute knowledge of the Absolute *i.e.* in intuition it is not; in the relative knowledge of the Absolute or Absolute made relative, or Absolute relatively grasped it comes in—in fact it is this that makes the Absolute relative. This relative absolute, this Being together with, or wedded to, Becoming is *Isvara* or the Lord of the universe. It is this wielding of *Mâyâ-sakti* which makes pure Being or Brahman *Isvara* or Being in and with Becoming, it constitutes the *Isvarahood* of Brahman. In this sense *Isvara* the possessor of *Mâyâ* is identical with *Mâyâ* (*Sakti-saktimatoh ananyatvât*). So the question of false knowledge residing in true knowledge does not come in—in *Isvara* it is not false knowledge but power. But with individual souls it is otherwise. There the true knowledge of Brahman as pure being-knowledge-bliss is obscured. There the materiality and mentality with their infinite variations are not false appearances but solid realities; the one is gone and the many reigns supreme. There it is that the Lord's *Mâyâ-sakti* is turned into false knowledge. So we find that in the essence of pure Being there is no trace of *Mâyâ*, in Being-Becoming *Mâyâ* resides as power—it being identical with Becoming, in individual souls *Mâyâ* is false knowledge. Hence it is but natural that those philosophers (e.g. the *Visishtâd-*

*vaitins*, *Bhedâbhedins*, etc.) whose definition of Reality includes Becoming with Being will view *Mâyâ* as the Lord's power—and as real power at that; whereas those (e.g. the *Sankarites*) whose definition does not include Becoming will not recognize *Mâyâ* as a metaphysical entity. But none of them deny its pragmatic reality. It is not a fact that *Sankarites* deny life and experience. And the reason why they keep silent when the critics impute it to them is that they do not believe in the ontological reality of *Mâyâ* and its products and as such the critics are right to that extent. Truly or absolutely speaking *Mâyâ* is not, pragmatically speaking it is. The highest end of our life being the realization of this Absolute, this view-point of the Absolute is stressed and *Mâyâ* is very often spoken of as non-existing.

One point more needs to be discussed to make *Sankara's* position clear. Why should *Sankara* object to including Becoming within the definition of Being? Why should he fail to see that the essence of things remains the same throughout infinite modifications of names and forms and pragmatic values? The answer is, *Sankara* has not failed to see it, on the contrary he has affirmed it. In his commentary on the famous *Bṛihadâraṇyaka Upanishad* text beginning with "*Purnamadah Purnamidam*", when meeting the *Vṛittikâra* view, he has admitted this in the case of all things consisting of parts. But Brahman or pure Being is not a thing that is made up of parts. Intuitional experience is so absolutely homogeneous as to preclude all possibility of parts. And Being having no parts, it is inconceivable for us to think that one part of it abides unchanged, while changes go on in another part. Hence it is that *Sankara* finds it difficult to include

Becoming within Being. But from the empirical point of view, from which materiality and mentality, both consisting of parts, are true this inclusion of Becoming within Being is possible, and Sankara finds no difficulty in admitting that. In pure Being, however, he would not admit the slightest touch of Becoming.

These are but a few of the answers given by the Sankarites to the criticisms against Advaita Vedānta. New objections or novel re-statements of old objections there will always be, and new answers or forms of answers will likewise be made. But within the domain of reason there is no hope of coming to a finality. This is true not only of Indian philosophical systems but of all philosophies—all histories of philosophy bear it out. And yet these systems are not useless. Man in his ordinary state of consciousness has but one guide, however blind it might be. He cannot ignore reason if he wants to live and to unveil the mysteries of the outer as well as the inner world. But it gives us at best only different angles of view of truth and not the truth itself. To get absolute truth we have to transcend reason and enter the inner chamber of intuition—philosophy must yield to mysticism. This is however a stage that comes later. As rational beings we must reason. Reason asks why's of things and they must be supplied unless we choose to be unhappy. So it is good for a country, and for the whole world, which wants to thrive in and by religion, to be furnished with all possible views of truth, with a thorough catalogue of their pros and cons.

This has been done in India, as in some other countries, to a fairly satisfactory degree. Analysis of truth, one might say, is complete. Time has

come for a broad synthesis of all the available data supplied by the laborious analyses of so many centuries. Very early in pre-historic days, favourable mental and material conditions led the Indian sages to intuit the integral truth in its pristine glory. Then it was made available to the reason of man through the creation and development of a bewildering number of philosophical systems mainly classed under three broad heads viz., monism, qualified monism, and dualism or pluralism. Each of these systems has developed, what is peculiar to India, a perfect system of symbology and iconology to raise the animal man to the rational man and the latter to the man of intuition. Man's thinking, feeling, willing, and doing—all have been supplied with their own philosophies and kindergarten methods, all have been orientated to the absolute truth. Now is the time ripe for a synthesis based on reason—reason, not divorced from intuition but as its faithful interpreter. This, as we have seen, had long been done by Vyāsa. But this had been done with a scant reference to reason; and so reason had to divide itself into rival camps for a number of centuries to make explicit the implications of intuitive truth. To get at the full view of Vyāsa's synthesis we must read his epic and some of the important *Puranas*. He has however epitomized his massive intellect in his *Vedānta-Sūtras*, which we understand better, if we read it after acquainting ourselves with the *Upanishads* on the one hand and the *Puranas* on the other. And the best interpreter of Vyāsa is Sankara, for we hardly find any other who, in his explanation, has not tortured the Nirguna Sruti texts to some extent. Whereas Sankara has given due place and consideration to both the Nirguna and Saguna Sritis;

at times we find him fighting with others for the Saguna interpretation of Srutis where that seemed to him to be right, though the Nirguna interpretation would have made his own conclusion stronger. After centuries of wranglings between the Sankarites and non-Sankarites, we understand Sankara all the better. Many things have been imputed to him which he did not mean; some of his sayings have been given prominence both by his critics and his admirers, while other state-

ments have been ignored or allowed a secondary position. These wrong interpretations and criticisms have done immense good to Advaita philosophy by pointing out where misinterpretations were possible and where finer elucidations were necessary. In the cultural history of India the position of Vyâsa and Sankara as now understood is unique; and one might venture to say that in the future cultural history of the world these two figures will occupy an equally prominent position.

(Concluded)

## ATMABODHA

BY SWAMI SIDDHATMANANDA

स्वयमन्तर्बहिर्व्याप्य भासयन्नखिलं जगत् ।

ब्रह्म प्रकाशते बह्विप्रतप्तायसपिण्डवत् ॥ ६२ ॥

ब्रह्म Brahman अन्तर्बहिर्व्याप्य pervading it through and through अखिलं जगत् the whole universe भासयन् illuminating बह्विप्रतप्तायसपिण्डवत् like a red-hot iron ball स्वयम् प्रकाशते manifests Itself ( i. e. shines in Its own effulgence).

62. Brahman manifests Itself, like (fire in) a red-hot iron ball,<sup>1</sup> illuminating the whole universe and pervading it through and through.

<sup>1</sup> Like (fire in) . . . . . ball etc.—As fire manifests itself making the iron ball glow so Brahman manifests Itself illuminating the whole universe. Iron by itself is not incandescent, it is fire that makes it so. Similarly, this whole universe is illumined by Brahman alone (*vide* Mund. Up. II. 10).

जगद्विलक्षणं ब्रह्म ब्रह्माणोऽन्यन्न किञ्चन ।

ब्रह्मान्यद्वाति चेन्मिथ्या यथा मरुमरीचिका ॥ ६३ ॥

ब्रह्म Brahman जगद्विलक्षणं (is) different from the world ब्रह्मणः अन्यत् different from Brahman किञ्चन न (अस्ति) there exists nothing ब्रह्मान्यत् वाति चेत् although something different from Brahman appears ( तत् that ) मिथ्या (is) false यथा मरुमरीचिका even as a mirage (is false).

63. Brahman is different from the world; nothing different from Brahman exists. Although something different from Brahman is experienced, it is false like a mirage.

दृश्यते श्रूयते यद्यद् ब्रह्माणोऽन्यन्न तद्वेत् ।

तत्त्वज्ञानाच्च तद् ब्रह्म सच्चिदानन्दमद्वयम् ॥ ६४ ॥

यद्यद whatever दृश्यते is seen श्रूयते ( च and ) is heard तत् that ब्रह्मणः अन्यत् different from Brahman न भवेत् is not ; तत् that तत्त्वज्ञानात् through Knowledge च indeed सच्चिदानन्दम्-ब्रह्म Non-dual Brahman which is Existence, Intelligence and Bliss (भवेत् becomes).

64. Whatever is heard or seen is not different from Brahman. Indeed, through Knowledge that itself is realised as the Non-dual Brahman which is Existence, Intelligence and Bliss.

Whatever we hear or see is actually Brahman but distorted due to our ignorance even as when we see a snake in the rope ; it is actually the rope we see though it appears as the snake due to our ignorance.

**सर्वगं सच्चिदानन्दं ज्ञानचक्षुर्निरीक्षते ।**

**अज्ञानचक्षुर्नेक्षेत भास्वन्तं भानुमन्धवत् ॥ ६५ ॥**

ज्ञानचक्षुः One having the eyes of Knowledge सर्वगं all-pervading सच्चिदानन्दं Existence, Intelligence, Bliss (ब्रह्म Brahman) निरीक्षते sees ; भास्वन्तं भानुमन्धवत् as a blind man does not see the shining sun अज्ञानचक्षुः one having the eyes of ignorance ( ब्रह्म Brahman ) न ईक्षेत does not see.

65. One having Knowledge sees the all-pervading Brahman—the Existence, Intelligence, and Bliss. An ignorant man does not see the Brahman even as a blind man does not see the resplendent sun.

**श्रवणादिभिरुद्गीतज्ञानाग्निपरितापितः ।**

**जीवः सर्वमलान्मुक्तः स्वर्णवत् द्योतते स्वयम् ॥ ६६ ॥**

श्रवणादिभिरुद्गीतः-ज्ञानाग्निपरितापितः Purified by the fire of Knowledge kindled by Sravana etc. सर्वमलान्मुक्तः freed from all impurities जीवः jiva स्वर्णवत् like (pure) gold स्वयम् द्योतते shines by itself.

66. Purified by the fire of Knowledge kindled by Sravana etc. and being free from all imperfections, the Jiva shines by itself (i.e., manifests its real nature) even as gold shines (when bereft of all dross).

**हृदाकाशोदितो ह्यात्मा बोधभानुस्तमोपहृत् ।**

**सर्वव्यापी सर्वधारी भाति भासयतेऽखिलम् ॥ ६७ ॥**

हृदाकाशोदितः Rising in the mind (of the Jiva) सर्वव्यापी all-pervading सर्वधारी all-supporting तमोपहृत् dispeller of darkness बोधभानुः the sun of knowledge आत्मा Ātman हि alone भाति shines अखिलम् the whole universe भासयते (च and) illumines.

67. The All-pervading, All-supporting Ātman—the sun of knowledge, the dispeller of ignorance, rising in the mind of the Jiva, shines and illumines the whole universe.

**दिग्देशकालाद्यनपेक्ष्य सर्वगं शीतादिहृन्नित्यसुखं निरञ्जनम् ।**

**यः स्वात्मतीर्थं भजते विनिष्क्रियः स सर्ववित् सर्वगतोऽमृतो भवेत् ॥ ६८ ॥**

विनिष्क्रियः ( सन् ) Being free from all actions यः who दिग्देशकालाद्यनपेक्ष्य regardless of direction, space, time, etc. सर्वगं all-pervading शीतादिहृन्नित्य destroyer of heat, cold



etc. निवसुखं eternally blissful निरुद्धं free from all impurities स्वात्मतौष्ट्यं भजते resorts to one's own self सः he सर्ववित् all-knowing सर्वगतः all-pervading अमृतः immortal भवेत् becomes.

68. He who renouncing all actions and regardless of direction, space, time, etc. resorts to one's own self<sup>1</sup> which is all-pervading, eternally blissful, free from all impurities, and destroyer of heat, cold, etc. becomes all-knowing, all-pervading and immortal.

<sup>1</sup> Resorts to . . . . . self etc.—The process of discriminating the real from the unreal and the means of attaining the Self has been expounded. This concluding verse says that an aspirant who is under all circumstances and at all times devoted to Self-knowledge, disregarding all external things, attains the highest goal of life.

(Concluded)

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

*God in Christ* by Swami Vivekananda is from some of the class talks that he gave during his second visit to America. . . . In *The Study of Sanskrit and its Beneficent Influence* we have put forward some cogent arguments in favour of the revival of Sanskritic studies. . . . We have given in this issue some illuminating *Talks of Swami Brahmananda* and shall continue to do so in some subsequent issues. They are for the first time translated into English from the original Bengali and so may be of profit to the English-reading public. . . . Victor Loga is a new contributor from Poland. His article on *Moral Problems of the Present Age* discusses from the Vedāntic point of view how an objective moral standard can be set up at the present important moments of our life. . . . *Sankara's Interpretation of the Vedānta-Sūtras* by Swami Vireswarananda is taken from the introduction to his forthcoming book the *Brahma-Sūtras* with English rendering and notes. Our readers may remember our having published a few select Sūtras in 1935. . . . Mr. H. Ototsu is the Imperial consul for Japan. He read this paper on *shinto or the way of the Gods*

at the Convention of Religions held at Colombo under the auspices of the Sri Ramakrishna Birth Centenary in August last. . . . *History of the Vedāntic Thought* by Swami Satswarupananda is concluded in this issue with a critical estimate of the views of Rāmānuja, Madhva and others. *Ātmabodha* is concluded in this issue.

### WHY HAS INDIA FAILED?

It is often remarked that the devotion to her high spiritual ideals has been the cause of India's undoing. India has failed miserably in the political field. Though some of her great men theoretically grasped "the importance of wealth and power to give expression to spirit" India failed to realize it practically. There are some who would perhaps demur to India's being called a failure. Political mirror they would say hardly reflects the real worth or success of a nation, and that in spite of her present degradation and suffering, "India still bears witness to the cult of spirit." There is an undeniable element of truth in the objection. But it is also true that long periods of political subjection tend to crush the very conditions of spiritual growth and

that political degeneration is itself a reflex of an unbalanced society. Even for the inward growth of a people certain outward conditions are necessary. We may go gushing about our high spiritual ideals, but that will not alter the plain fact of our political failure.

Is this failure due to an excessive attention being paid to spirit? "It is not right to complain", says Sir Radhakrishnan in the October issue of the *Hibbert Journal*, "that India has failed because she has followed after things spiritual. She has failed because she has not followed after them sufficiently. She has not learned how to make spirit entirely the master of life, but has created in recent times a gulf between spirit and life and has rested in a compromise. Some of our holy men are inclined to become creatures set apart, beings who take flight from the temporal in order to cling to the heart of the eternal. If, in our eagerness to seek after God, we ignore the interests of humanity, we may produce a few giants but we will not elevate the race. We have shown how high individuals can rise by spiritual culture and how low a race can fall by its one-sidedness. To master life, to accept it and improve it is a difficult task for the individual and more difficult for the race. Harmony of the social order is an essential aim of the spiritual man."

The learned professor's words echo what Vivekananda repeatedly emphasized forty years ago. India's plight has been due not to her loss of faith in spirit. It has been due to her failure to make the world a medium for the expression of spirit and her starving the masses of real nourishing spiritual food. Looking across the long-stretched vistas of her past history, what picture do we get of Indian society? Is it not often that our eyes greet the picture of a community where only a

handful having sufficient leisure lived in the heights of spiritual culture. The masses who drudged for a bare pittance had scarcely any opportunities to appreciate the niceties of the high culture and civilization, though tradition taught them to pay homage to spirit and to submit meekly to their lot in an attitude of almost happy resignation. While the clear water of spirit sped by they quenched their thirst for religion with the turbid water from ditches. Being spoon-fed they, in the course of time, fell victim to a debasing philosophy which congealed their activity and stunted their growth. Decay attacked the limb where the vital flow of spirit had ceased and brought the high and low to a common ruin. If the ruin is to be arrested and a new life regained we shall need more of real religion. The masses have to be quickened to a new life by the dynamic message of Vedânta. They have to be taught that religion and salvation are not for the hermit alone; the labourer and the peasant too have a right to them even in their own walks of life.

### REINCARNATION

It is characteristic of the wider outlook of philosophy in the twentieth century that some of its followers have begun to address themselves to problems which were contemptuously dubbed as supernatural and therefore excluded from serious consideration by the nineteenth century philosophy, dominated as it was by scientific materialism. The changed attitude has been largely due to the shock which twentieth century physics, biology, and psychology have given to some fundamental assumptions of commonsense and science, and also to the recent interest created by some fascinating and mysterious psychic phenomena. These have helped to create a new interest in religion and

mysticism among men of scientific attitude of mind. The new interest has demanded that the old religious beliefs and ideas should be re-interpreted and re-stated in a way which would square with the findings of science. The fact of religious experience is indubitable; nonetheless it is true that it has often found different and devious expressions according to the varying intellectual abilities and outlooks of numerous religious persons. Moreover, such facts of religious experience have been interpreted in terms of the contemporary knowledge of the world. There is need, therefore, that they should be always explained and restated in terms of an expanding outlook and a widening knowledge of the visible universe.

One such problem is that which concerns reincarnation. Modern science seems to raise many difficulties from different standpoints in the way of accepting it. Some time ago there was an interesting discussion about it by Profs. C. F. M. Joad and M. Hiri-yanna in the pages of the *Aryan Path*. Prof. Joad examined it as he understood the doctrine from McTaggart's theory of plurality of lives. Apart from detailed criticism he dismissed such a theory on two main grounds. Prof. Joad's first objection is that we have no memory of our past lives. The second one draws attention to the fact that character depends on the physical body. To be more precise, it is determined by the secretions of ductless glands. So with the destruction of a physical body, the character dependent on it disappears. In such a case, even if the ego survives bodily destruction and lives through different lives, it cannot be said that it is the same through all the bodies, for different bodies will sustain different and discontinuous personalities. Prof. Hiri-yanna's answers from the Indian standpoint are able and

sufficient. To deny pre-existence to self on the ground that our psychical history fails to penetrate the veil of the present life is to confound a thing with the consciousness of it. As regards the second objection which holds that the personality of a self is indissolubly tied up with the body and that no self can in any imaginable sense be said to transmigrate without the body itself transmigrating, it is replied that the Indian standpoint has been overlooked. The personality of the self is indeed looked upon as linked up with the body in the Indian systems. But then, it is the Sukshma Sarira, a sort of psychic vesture for the soul, which is the depository of all the tendencies of a particular self and which transmigrates into a grosser body. Certain tendencies in an individual, the Indian writers point out, are inexplicable with the help of environment and heredity alone. They inevitably point back to an earlier existence. But the most important argument is furnished by the conception of Moksha or eternal freedom, once it is accepted. Immortality proves pre-existence, for it is difficult to conceive how a thing which has no end can have a beginning. A single life is palpably inadequate to the attainment of Moksha. Therefore, the poverty of man's present spiritual life taken along with the ultimate greatness of his destiny explains the belief in a plurality of lives.

A few more considerations could have been urged as pointing to reincarnation. It is not true that our knowledge of psychical history is necessarily limited to the present life. There have been men who have claimed to have recollected their past lives vividly. Such evidence cannot be lightly dismissed. Destruction of the physical body entails so great a change of environment that the chain of mental history seems to suffer an irreparable break. Such an

occurrence is not unoften the case in the case of this present life. Admitting the dependence of character on the physical body may it not be said that a self with a particular bent fashions out and inhabits a suitable body for its proper outward expression? Because our brain-cells move when we think, it is naïve to say that thinking is an effect

of such movement. Besides recent psychical investigations carried out by reputed scientists show that not only is the personality not destroyed with the destruction of the physical body, but that the mind and character can function and continue without the assistance of the gross physical vehicle.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

NICHOLAS ROERICH. By K. P. PADMA-NABHAN TAMPY, B.A. *Published by The Travancore Humanitarian Co-operative Society, Ltd., No. 1934. Trivandrum. Pp. 108.*

Nicholas Roerich is one of those rare, living individuals who have tried to open out the glorious vision of a new world of beauty, harmony, and human fellowship to the groping humanity. First and foremost an artist, his versatile genius has won laurels in diverse fields. He has not only been classed among the representatives of Modernism but has also been acclaimed as the founder of a new school of art. His suggestive and symbolical art which seeks to capture the spirit of the eternal in the media of the fleeting has made his reputation world-wide. The greatness of the appeal of his art is shown by the tribute which the most famous of the cultural centres of the world have paid to his works by setting apart numerous museums and art galleries for the preservation and exhibition of his paintings. But Roerich is more than an artist. He is a messenger of peace and culture, a humanitarian, an educationist and a literary figure of no mean order and an explorer of no small reputation. The Roerich Pact will remain an enduring monument to his love of culture and humanitarianism. His *Heart of Asia* and the *Altai Himalayas* have been read with interest by lay readers and men of science alike.

The monograph under review is no biography of the great artist; it is only an appreciation of the varied phases of his versatile genius prefaced by the barest account of his life and travels. It would also not be proper to turn to it for a detailed examination and evaluation of Roerich's art and

literary output. The pages acquaint one only with the broad outlines of his work and personality. The work abounds with quotations from renowned art-critics, artists and savants, which show the regard and esteem in which his name is held by men of culture of different lands. The author writes almost with a spirit of adoration. He would, however, have sacrificed nothing from the greatness, force, and dignity of the character of his hero if he wrote with more moderation and restraint of language.

ALLAHABAD UNIVERSITY STUDIES VOL. XII (ARTS AND SCIENCE). EDITED BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR AND THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS. SENATE HOUSE, ALLAHABAD, 1936. Pp. 299-488. Price Rs. 7-8.

The studies cover a wide range of subjects in both Arts and Science. There are altogether 23 of them, 8 being devoted to the Arts Section and the rest to Science. The Science Section includes articles on Chemistry, Botany, and Zoology, and the Arts Section those on English, Sanskrit, Philosophy, Economics and Urdu. Among those included in the latter we have found the articles on *Universities in India during the Hindu Period* by Prof. P. K. Acharya and *The Rôle of Reasoning in Advaita Philosophy* by A. C. Mukherji to be interesting and instructive.

MESSAGE OF SRIMAD-BHAGVAD-GITA.

By R. V. SHAH. *Published by Ramanlal Vaidilal Shah. Kapasia Bazâr, Dalal Bldg., Ahmedabad. Pp. 75. Price Re. 1/- or S. 1/6 nett.*

The book records the author's musings on the *Gita*, a fairly large portion of it being a mere paraphrasing of some of the verses of the *Gita*. Neither the ideas nor the presentation strike as novel and well-ordered, while the style as a whole is affected to a degree.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### SWAMI DHIRANANDA

Swami Dhirananda (Krishnalal Maharaj), a senior monk of the Ramkrishna Mission and a disciple of Swami Brahmananda passed away at 0-50 a.m. on Monday, the 23rd November, after suffering from facial carbuncle for about a month.

Krishnalal Maharaj hailed from the district of 24 Parganas and joined the Math at Alumbazar about 40 years ago. He had the unique privilege of rendering personal services to the Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda, Swami Yogananda and some other disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, and as such could give valuable information about the lives of those great personalities. Krishnalal Maharaj was held in high esteem by all the devotees of the Ramakrishna Order for his great spirituality, which won praise even from the Holy Mother, Swami Brahmananda and others fit to talk authoritatively on the subject. He had a very sympathetic heart, and was kindness itself to one and all. Everybody could be sure of his help under all circumstances and in times of all difficulties. It was a unique sight to observe how spontaneous he was in giving help to the poor and the needy. His childlike simplicity and unostentatious behaviour disarmed all fears and anybody could mix with him very freely. But yet he had a dignity in him for which whoever approached him could not but think only of the higher ideals of life.

He was a devout soul, and very rigid about his spiritual practices till the last days of his life. The proper management of the Pujas and the Utsavas at the Belur Math owed not a little to his keen interest and untiring energy.

He held an important position in the Order, being a trustee of the Belur Math and a member of the Governing Body of the Ramkrishna Mission. For some years he was also the treasurer of the Mission. His death is a very great loss to the Ramkrishna Order. Many are the persons who will sadly miss his inspiring presence, and no less will be the number of those who will lovingly and gratefully cherish his memory for what he had done for them.

### SWAMI KAMALESHWARANANDA

Swami Kamaleshwarananda, head of the Gadādhara Āshrama and Sri Ramakrishna Veda Vidyālaya, Bhawanipur, passed away on the night of 24th October. He was a disciple of Swami Brahmananda and joined the Ramakrishna Order about twenty-two years ago. He was of a devotional temperament and learned in the Scriptures, and all were charmed by his lucid exposition of the *Upanishads*, the *Gītā*, *Srimad Bhāgavatam*, *Yoga Vāsistha* and other works. He started the Ramakrishna Veda Vidyālaya, Bhawanipur, for the spread of Vedic learning. The Swami was only 44 years old when he passed away. His passing away has come rather as a great shock to all his friends, whose number was pretty large, to whom he had endeared himself by his qualities of head and heart.

### VEDANTA SOCIETY, PROVIDENCE, U. S. A.

#### REPORT FOR 1935-36

Throughout the season lectures were conducted as usual on Sundays. Tuesday classes studied the *Upanishads*, and Friday classes were devoted to practical lessons in meditation and to the study of the *Gītā*. Toward the end of the season, Friday classes were changed to Thursdays so that the Swami might give weekly lectures in Philadelphia. Regular interviews were as always given to the students as well as to the Press.

This year the radio station WPRO asked the Swami to speak regularly twice a week instead of once a week because the talks were much liked. At intervals of one and a half to two months, the Swami also alternates with ministers in speaking over WJAR and WEAN for the morning devotions. All these talks continue throughout the year.

In October of 1935, Swami Akhilananda visited the cities of Cleveland, Philadelphia and St. Louis giving in each a series of three lectures on religion and psychology. Appreciative response was shown in all the three places, especially in Philadelphia and in St. Louis.

The lectures in Philadelphia were given in an exclusive club called the Art Alliance,

and drew people from the best social and educated circles as well as from others. There appeared to be such a promising future that the Swami continued his lectures there monthly. In the spring, on being urged by Philadelphia friends, he began speaking there on Fridays and Saturdays every week until the end of the season.

In November and December the Metaphysical Club of Boston sent the Swami a special request to give a series of lectures there. He delivered four lectures on Sunday afternoons in each of the two months. Later, the Club as well as the friends pressed the Swami to continue these lectures again after the Christmas holiday, but he declined because of preparations for the Centenary Celebration.

The birthdays of the Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda, and Swami Brahmananda were celebrated with Hindu worship and specially prepared dinners with music and lectures by the Swamis and prominent friends. Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter had their characteristic celebrations, as well as the birthday of Buddha and festivities of other religions. Five Swamis were entertained at various times, and gave lectures on the different occasions of their visits. In January and February there were elaborate preparations for the celebration of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary.

The immediately noticeable result of the Celebration was a greater number of letters from unknown people to the Swami, and an increased demand for the Swami as a speaker to various religious societies and gatherings of different kinds—of ministers, of Men's and Women's Church Clubs including a Jewish women's group, of Young People's Church Societies, of Y. M. C. A. Boys groups and of Religious Conferences of all ages.

Swami Akhilananda lectured at Brown University on the contributions of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda to Religion and Philosophy. This year the Swami was specially invited to lecture on Sri Ramakrishna to the Ministers' Universal Club of Brown University of which he is a member and whose monthly discussions and debates he joins every year. He also spoke at other Associations of Ministers in the State, and again joined the meetings of the Union Ministers' Association. He spoke many times to Jewish groups and at different Churches and Clubs of Christ in the city and State as well as in some of the cities of Massachusetts.

## THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, KANKHAL, HARDWAR

### REPORT FOR 1935

The necessity of a Sevashrama at a holy centre like Kankhal can hardly be overestimated. During the last 35 years of its existence the Sevashrama has been making its humble attempts to mitigate the sufferings of pilgrims and local people in various ways.

The total number of patients admitted in Sevashrama during the year was 551, belonging to all classes and castes of the society. The number of cases receiving outdoor relief was 20,979. Besides the hospital work, the Sevashrama conducts a night school with a view to imparting primary education to the children of the local depressed classes. There were 30 boys on the rolls at the end of the year. There is also a library attached to the Sevashrama, where religious books are kept for the benefit of the workers of the Ashrama. Birthday anniversary of Vivekananda was celebrated on which occasion about a thousand poor Harijans were fed by the workers of the Ashrama.

## THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION, BARISAL BRANCH

### REPORT FOR 1935

The Ashrama runs a Students' Home for College boys on the lines of the Brahmacharya Ashramas of old. It aims not only to help indigent and bright boys to continue their studies in college but also to develop and strengthen their moral and spiritual inclinations by providing a suitable environment. They are also trained in habits of self-reliance by being obliged to perform various sorts of household duties for themselves. At the end of the year there were 12 boys on the rolls, of whom 6 were free, 4 concession-holders and 2 paying. Of the 8 students who appeared at the different University examinations 7 came out successful. There is a small library and a free reading room attached to the Ashrama. During the year under report the Ashrama also rendered help to destitute persons in the shape of rice, clothes or money and undertook to nurse a few patients in the town. Apart from these, daily and weekly classes and discourses on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were held in the Mission premises. The Swamis of the Mission were also invited to deliver

lectures and hold classes at different places in and outside the town.

### THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION SEVA-SHRAMA, BRINDABAN

REPORT FOR 1935

During the year under report the activities of the Sevashrama were carried under the following heads: (i) Indoor Relief. There were 24 beds in the Indoor Hospital. The total number of patients treated during the year was 334. The total number of surgical cases was 21. (ii) Outdoor Relief. Altogether 31,774 cases were treated at the Outdoor Department during the year. The total number of surgical cases was 229. (iii) Pecuniary Relief. There were nine permanent recipients of pecuniary relief and sixteen persons were given occasional help. The total expenditure incurred under this head amounted to Rs. 135-11-6. Apart from money help was also given to a few in the shape of blankets and clothings.

### RAMKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA AND CHARITABLE DISPENSARY, BANKURA

REPORT FOR 1935

The charitable dispensary connected with the Bankura Ashrama has been of immense benefit to the suffering people of the locality. This can at once be seen from the record of the number of cases treated. During the year altogether 71,380 cases were treated, of which 51,222 were repeated cases. Both Allopathic and Homœopathic treatments were adhered to. Apart from the hospital work the Ashrama is engaged in other kinds of activities. It organized occasional relief works in flood and famine-stricken areas in Bankura. It maintained a number of students at the Ashrama, who were receiving training in Homœopathic treatment. It also runs a free primary school which had 44 students on its rolls during the year. Several Swamis and Brahmacharis of the Ashrama delivered lectures at different places in Bankura district. Special meetings were arranged by the Ashrama on the occasion of the visits of a few distinguished visitors.

### THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION, DELHI BRANCH

THE THIRD GENERAL REPORT  
(JANUARY, 1932—DECEMBER, 1935)

The activities of the institution fall under the following heads: (i) Religious preaching,

(ii) Library and Reading Room, (iii) Outdoor General Dispensary, (iv) Tuberculosis clinic.

(i) Preaching Work. During the period under report daily and weekly classes were held at the Ashrama on scriptures and the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. Discourses on scriptures and Vivekananda's work were also given every week in several places outside the Ashrama. Besides these, public lectures were delivered by the Swamis of the Mission in several towns in North and West and East India. Meetings were also organized on the occasions of the visits of distinguished Swamis from other parts of India and abroad. Birthday anniversaries of Vivekananda and Ramakrishna were celebrated when the poor were fed.

(ii) The Library and the Reading Room were open to the public every day.

(iii) During the period under review 21,016 patients were treated in the Outdoor General Dispensary.

(iv) Free Tuberculosis Clinic. The clinic was started in 1933 with the object of offering patients suffering from tuberculosis treatment according to up-to-date scientific processes with the help of competent doctors who volunteered their services without pay. The total attendance of patients was 14,469, the total number of new patients being 1,038.

### THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION, SINGAPORE

REPORT FOR 1935

During the year under review the Singapore Branch of the Mission celebrated the centenary birthday of Sri Ramakrishna and organized special meetings on the occasions of the visits of distinguished Swamis from abroad. Religious classes were conducted regularly by the Resident Minister who also visited a number of places outside the town and delivered lectures and held discourses on religion and allied subjects. The Mission runs a school, the Vivekananda School, for boys and girls. The total number of students at the end of the year was 85, of which 20 received their tuition free. The Ashrama has a night school open to the working classes of all nationalities. During the year 126 adults comprising Tamils, Punjabees and Malayas received their tuition free. The Mission maintained a Library and a Reading Room which were open to the public.

### THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH CHARITABLE DISPENSARY, MADRAS

REPORT FOR 1935

The Charitable Dispensary attached to the Ramakrishna Math, Madras, has been fulfilling a long-felt want of the poorer section of the locality. This is borne out by the enormous rise in the number of patients treated now from what it was in 1925 when it was first started. The total number of patients during 1935 amounted to 68,667, of which 41,008 were repeated cases.

### RAMKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, MIDNAPORE

REPORT FOR 1933-35

During the period under report the Sevashrama ran two free primary schools for boys, conducted several religious classes and offered medical help to a large number of needy persons. It also undertook various kinds of relief operations in connection with the small-pox epidemic in the town in 1935. There is a dispensary attached to the Sevashrama. During the period the indoor department admitted 208 persons altogether, while the outdoor department administered Homœopathic treatment to over 100,000 persons.

### SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, MYSORE

REPORT FOR 1935

During the year the Swamis of the Ashrama held weekly classes on general religious and moral subjects at seven different institutions in the city. A class was also held every Sunday at the Ashrama, which was always well attended. Birthday celebrations of Ramakrishna and several other saints were held, during which lectures by distinguished persons were organized. The Ashrama has also a Students' Home which had 16 boys at the end of the year under review. The boys receive their board and lodging at concession rates except one who is free. The study circle which was started some years ago had three Sannyasins and one Brahmacharin. The Ashrama library was enlarged during the year by the addition of a number of books. The Ashrama also undertook some welfare work at Padukarahali in co-operation with a number of local persons.

### THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, CALCUTTA

REPORT FOR 1935

The Ramkrishna Mission Students' Home, Calcutta, which steps into the eighteenth year of its useful existence in 1936 was started mainly with the idea of supplementing the one-sided character of our University education with some training in character-building and in the elements of our national culture. The Home is a college students' hostel licensed by the Calcutta University and run on the lines of a Brahmacharya Ashrama. It is intended specially for poor and meritorious students who are helped through their college course with free board, lodging, fees, books and also other necessities as far as possible. It also receives a number of paying students who want to have the benefit of Home-training. The main features of the Home-training fall under three heads, namely, (1) spiritual, (2) intellectual, and (3) practical. Along with the holding of regular classes on the scriptures various *ulsabs* or religious festivals are celebrated which help both to develop spiritual aspirations among the boys and to provide a healthy recreation for them. The Home runs a manuscript magazine and holds Saturday classes for the discussion of socio-religious topics. Apart from performing all household duties the students also work in kitchen and flower gardens.

At the end of the year there were 33 students in the Home, of whom 22 were free, 2 concession-holders and 9 paying. 13 students sat for different University examinations. Of these one passed the M. A., three graduated in Arts, one in Science, four got through the Intermediate Examination and one passed the P. Sc. M. B. Examination.

Total receipts and disbursements during the year were Rs. 13,161-10-3 and Rs. 7,876-8 respectively.

The immediate needs of the Home are funds for reclaiming a marshy land and for putting up a few structures, namely, a prayer-hall, a library building, a dining hall, a medical ward and a few cottages for workers.

### RAMKRISHNA MISSION, Dacca

REPORT FOR 1934 AND 1935

The activities of the Dacca Branch of Ramkrishna Mission which has completed its thirty-sixth year of existence in 1935, are



carried under three heads, namely, (i) charitable, (ii) educational, and (iii) missionary.

During the period under report its charitable activities were as follows. Its outdoor Homeopathic Charitable Dispensary with an attached Allopathic section served altogether 12,875 cases. Besides, the Mission undertook a number of cases for outdoor nursing. It also collected funds, rice and clothes for distribution among the needy.

The educational activities of the centre included the running of four free schools, two for girls, one M. E. school for boys and one for boys and girls of the backward community, the conducting of two libraries, a reading room and the rendering of pecuniary help to needy students.

The missionary activities consisted of the holding of regular scriptural classes, organising of public lectures and the celebration of anniversaries of saints and prophets.

#### THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION INDUSTRIAL HOME AND SCHOOL, BELUR MATH, HOWRAH

##### REPORT FOR 1935

The Industrial School at Belur was started fifteen years ago as a humble experiment in tackling, however, mildly, the severe problem of widespread unemployment among the boys and youths of our country. During its brief existence it has succeeded in getting a number of boys started on an independent career of earning their livelihood. Its steady expansion has betokened the measure of its success.

The course of studies are (1) Cabinet-making, (2) Weaving, and Dyeing, and (3) Tailoring. The number of students at the end of the year was 40, of which 24 were inmates of the Home, the rest being day-scholars. Of the 16 students who appeared for the final examination of the school 13 came out successful.

Apart from industrial and technical training in the school the residents of the Home receive instructions in general knowledge, training in household management and also in religious and moral subjects. The boys also take part in a number of recreative and social activities which keep up their mental and physical health. Devotional

songs are taught to boys who are also encouraged to take regular physical exercises.

#### THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION'S RELIEF WORK

We beg to announce that the Famine and Flood relief work started by the Ramkrishna Mission in the different districts of Bengal and Burma have been closed by the second week of November, 1936. We gratefully thank all donors and sympathisers whose kind co-operation enabled us to bring the above work to a successful termination.

A Cyclone relief work has just been started in the Chirala Taluq of the Guntur district, and is being conducted by the Madras branch of the Mission. Contributions for this work will be thankfully received either by the President, Ramkrishna Mission, Belur Math, Howrah, or by the Hony. Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission, Mylapore, Madras.

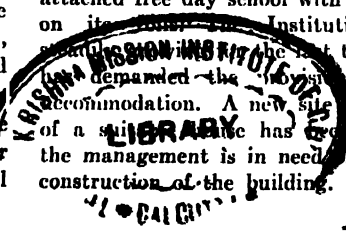
SWAMI MADHAVANANDA,

*Acting Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission.*

15th November, 1936.

#### SARADESWARI ASHRAMA AND FREE SCHOOL FOR HINDU GIRLS

The Saradeswari Ashrama situated at 26, Maharani Hemanta Kumari Street, Calcutta, was started by Sannyasini Gauri Mācāji, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, in 1895 with a view to providing a real education to the women of the country on a national, religious and useful basis. Though the institution does not belong to the Ramakrishna Mission, it is run on the same lines. It is a Home for housing and training girls and widows of the respectable classes of the Hindu society and leading them to a career of usefulness. It sends up students for the University and Sanskrit Title Examinations. At present the inmates number about 50, and most of them are maintained by the Ashrama from its Fund created by public charity. There is an attached free day school with about 300 girls on its staff. The Institution has been established for the last ten years which has demanded the provision for increased accommodation. A new site for the erection of a suitable building has been obtained and the management is in need of funds for the construction of the building.















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